











# SOLOMON SEESAW.

BY

J. P. ROBERTSON,

SENIOR AUTHOR OF

LETTERS ON PARAGUAY.

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*WITH ILLUSTRATIONS BY PHIZ.*

VOL. I.

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SOLOMON SESSAW

J. P. ROBERTSON

LETTERS ON PARAGUAY

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Stamford Street.

## DEDICATION.

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TO THE LORD VISCOUNT BERESFORD.

MY LORD,

In dedicating, by your Lordship's permission, the following sheets to you, you will permit me to do so, rather as the senior author of a late work on South America, than as the writer of three volumes having no connexion with the historical events of that Country.

Your Lordship's name is as indelibly associated with America, as are the names of Columbus, Cortez, and Pizarro. There is one essential difference, however, in the cases. The career of those conquerors, heroic as it was, was stained, in not a few instances, by deeds of cruelty, which, even if necessary, can never be remembered without-regret.

Your Lordship's enterprize, on the contrary, while it exhibited all the gallantry of the conquerors of Montezuma and of Manco-Capac, was characterized

by none of the violence used to bring under the subjection of the Old World the vast and fertile regions of the New.

You conquered the people, but retained their friendship ; you subdued the country, but commanded the respect of its inhabitants. This is, perhaps, the highest tribute of applause to which a conqueror can aspire.

I can bear impartial, and I do bear most willing testimony to the honour and esteem in which your Lordship's name is held among them to this day.

I have the honour to be,

My Lord,

Your most obedient and obliged humble servant,

THE AUTHOR.

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## P R E F A C E.

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IN the following work an attempt is made,—by the combination of fact and fiction,—or rather, by a great deal of fact wrapt up in a little fiction,—to paint human life, *as it is*.

For the *reality* of the several characters I can vouch. The drapery in which they are clothed was necessary, in order to screen and protect individuals from public gaze.

I hope I have so far succeeded in this, as that no one person shall be able to say of another,—“Thou art the man.”

Some *may* recognise traits and likenesses of their own characters; but this is an incident almost inseparable from the sketches of him who takes his portraiture from real life.



With the dead, I have been a little less ceremonious than with the living. Leonora and Priscilla, Doctor Hasty and Doctor Rubhim, the Old Gentleman and Mrs. Macmunny, have all been sleeping for some years in the silent tomb.

I need not say that the stories of Lord Beauclerk, and the incidental mention of Lord Loftus, have no reference whatever to the noble families of those names. They were introduced quite incidentally, as assimilating somewhat in sound to the characters to be drawn.

I have endeavoured not to forget the maxim of "*De mortuis nil nisi bonum*;" for though there may be found, in some of the defunct characters, a spice of raillery, there will, I trust, be detected no evidence of malice.

As the senior contributor to "*Letters on Paraguay*," and to "*Francia's Reign of Terror*," I am aware that in turning over a new leaf,—in requesting the reader to accompany

me from personal incident, travel, history, biography, and geography, to a series of events, and portraiture of character, which, though taken from real life, may be more strictly termed imaginative,—I am bringing myself into the perilous predicament of having works already much favoured, contrasted with one, to which there may not be accorded such a meed of popularity.

But the die is cast. I hope it will be found not to be loaded with lead; and while the throw, if it prove a *good* one, will be productive of gladness of heart, yet, if a *bad* one, it will engender neither censure of the public, nor cavils against critics and reviewers. I owe, and most willingly acknowledge, a large debt of gratitude to them all.

A few of the objections offered on “*Francia’s Reign*” will, I hope, be satisfactorily answered in a forthcoming work upon South America.

THE AUTHOR.



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## ERRATA.

Page 168, last line, *for* "uncere-," *read* "unceremonious in."  
 ,, 231, *for* "Chapter IX," *read* "Chapter XIII."

# SOLOMON SEESAW.

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## CHAPTER I.

### INTRODUCTORY.

THERE is a strange fatality connected with that branch of literature, which, under the various designations of "Travels," "Observations," "Narratives," "Journals," "Residences," "Remarks," and "Reminiscences," may be classified as the literature of "*Movers About*."

Every man who, with the least pretensions to education, leaves home, thinks himself not only entitled to write a book, but under a certain moral obligation to do so. What would the world say, and especially what would his friends say if he did not? His "Journal" is shown to a small coterie of favoured acquaintance; the

“ Memoranda ” are submitted to the inspection of a “ select few ; ” various anecdotes, either “ wonderful,” or “ striking,” or of a “ novel character,” or “ highly interesting,” are, on a small scale, reluctantly put into circulation, and without the least idea, at the time, of such loose and hurried pieces ever seeing the light of publication.

When they do, it is with an apology for their numerous defects. They have been written “ cursorily ; ” they pretend to no depth of observation ; to nothing beyond a mere “ external glance ” at things, as they have presented themselves.

But this is not all. To complete the anomaly, it has often happened that your rapid tourist, being the native of one country, has stood forth as the annalist of another ; till it seems to have become a sort of admitted axiom, that the French or American traveller is the best delineator of English manners ; the English one of Austrian and American.

“Oh!” for instance, it is said, in England, “let us hear what our countryman so and so has to say of the Yankees;” and across the Atlantic, “Nay, but let us rather listen to what our countryman has to say of the English.” No doubt, both persons may be acute and agreeable writers; and they are therefore able to write very good books of travel, which, being stored with felicitous fictions, and rendered instructive by generalization, partake of the interest of romance, heightened by the positive assurance, and often by the appearance, of their being the veridical results of real observation.

That a great deal of real observation has been made there cannot be a doubt; but the problem to be solved is,—not so much how these observations should have passed current between one country and another,—as how they have got into such extensive circulation.

We know that in order to the obtaining of credit, there are two usual modes,—the one, that of showing that you are really a man of



substance,—the other, that of duping people into the belief that you are.

The first step in matters of pecuniary credit is, by some specious, but hollow reference, to get an equipage. The equipage procures you a handsomely-furnished house. The house attracts the butcher, the baker, the tailor, and the confectioner. Then pour in upon you, from all quarters, fifty other tradesmen humbly requesting that they may have the honour of your custom, such requests being accompanied by statements that they served the noble family which last occupied your mansion. At length the difficulty is not so much how to get credit, as how to select from among your numerous applicants the portion of them which shall “suffer.”

It is pretty much thus with your litterateur of the *move-about* class. He gets the name of some crack publisher to set him up. He has been to Hindostan, or Kamtschatka; and if he be a native of either of those places, so much the better. Thus is his literary fame established;

and this procures for him a local habitation and a name in the republic, probably in the aristocratic republic, of letters. He is soon puffed into notice, and advertised as a phenomenon; his countenance is sought, and his company is courted, by the *profanum vulgus* who read; till at last the only difficulty with the happy *move-about* writer is to consider how large a portion of his confiding and admiring dupes shall "suffer."

But let it not be supposed that the case runs entirely parallel between your fictitious candidate for credit, among tradesmen, and your spurious aspirant to wealth and fame, through the medium of three post-octavo volumes of "Travels" and "Observations."

Sooner or later, the pecuniary adventurer finds his asylum in the Bench; while the literary one, by means of a second and third edition, often rises to the meridian of fame and fortune.

These remarks, though they have reference generally to the authors of "Voyages and Tra-

vels," are meant more especially to bear upon the natives of one country, who, after a few months' residence in another, set about portraying the manners of it.

It is an acknowledged fact, that, difficult as is the task of drawing the portraiture of man, in all the heavings of his soul, in all the reasonings of his mind, and in all the bursting ebullitions of his heart, it is yet more difficult to draw him, as still the subject of these reasonings and emotions, modified by *nationality*. Peculiar habits, customs, climate, laws, lend a varied tone of expression, or mode of exhibition, to precisely the same *inward man*; and they are hence often mistaken for real differences of character. Jealousy, as exhibited in Othello,—revenge as portrayed in Iago,—ambition and remorse as represented in Lady Macbeth,—are of no particular nation or time. They are characteristics of our species.

Hotspur was not the more violent and testy because he was a native of Northumberland, and lived in feudal times, although the general

character of those times lent peculiar strength, colouring, and propriety to the character given of him by the Prince of Readers of the human heart. There are, in the present day, men quite as violent, testy, and self-willed as he was; only *they* cannot carry it, as the times allowed *him* to do, at the point of the sword. There are those now who would be king-makers as well as Warwick was; only their power being diminished, or the mode of its exercise being changed, they are obliged, under the semblance of constitutional authority, to do by intrigue what their predecessor Guy did by the shorter process of bringing into the field his armed followers and vassals.

Comparatively few men have the capacity to stand forth, in a way to attract notice, as striking and comprehensive delineators of human character.

Still fewer, perhaps, have the talent of pencilling into their canvass the national peculiarities, which, instead of deteriorating from the original

picture, only lend to it fresh vigour, grace, individuality, and truth.

The Archbishop of Grenada is a true picture of human nature; but he stands out with peculiar grace, painted in the drapery of a Spanish hierarch.

Sancho Panza is a more finished, and particularly a more humorous character than Don Quixote; both are perfectly true to nature;—just as much so as Sir Roger de Coverley is;—and yet it would be as awkward to see the Governor of Baratania acting in the capacity of equerry to any gallant knight now in Great Britain, as it would be to see Sir Roger transplanted, as a country gentleman, to the soil of La Mancha.

How like is Tereza Panza to the whole race of country gossips; and yet how much surprised should we not be to meet her in a Scotch “clachan,” or in an English village!

There are, then, it would seem, and there ever have been, *general* traits of character,



which belong to the whole of the family of man ; and there are national traits, not changing these general ones, but merely modifying them, in connexion with local circumstances. It is in this limited sense alone that we can either properly or philosophically admit the truth of the hackneyed observations (least made by those who observe most) that “ the French are a very different people from the English,” “ that the Dutch are not at all like the Spaniards ;” and that “ the Spaniards are of a distinct character from the natives of Norway.”

As if all these nations were not alike endowed with the universal emotions of love and hatred ; of joy and misery ; of hope and fear ; of placability and revenge ; of generosity and avarice ; of jealousy, covetousness, and envy, and of their opposites, confidence, generosity, and liberality.

I have endeavoured to show the difficulty of portraying with effect these various characters ; and I have shortly considered the greater stretch of genius required to portray them with

a faithful adherence to nature, as tinged by *nationality*.

No wonder, then, that the foreigners who come among us, or that we, who *as* foreigners, go among other people, especially if the residence among them be of short duration, fail so generally in conveying a correct or graphic notion of the various habits, by which nations of men are distinguished, while yet, in all essential points, they belong to one and the same human family.

It is evident, that in order well to portray the character of *man*, there must first be laid the foundation of solid thought, extensive reading, acute and general observation.

When we come to raise a question as to the character of *particular nations*, it must be upon the superstructure of long, minute, familiar, and matured study of the manner in which general character is modified by national.

Until we have acquired, in some measure, the double power of laying such foundation, and of rearing on it such superstructure, we may lay

our account with it that we never can be considered as master-builders, in this most interesting, and, beyond all question, most scientific department of the great and complicated structure of human wisdom.

It is only by such reading of mankind as this, that we can arrive at that still higher branch of study, of which the sage who prescribed it had formed so just an estimate, that he did not hesitate to speak of it in the imperative mood: "Nosce te ipsum."

The precept is, no doubt, one of impossible fulfilment; but it has at any rate the merit of pointing to the "semper melius aliquid."

Let me now test, by these premises which I believe to be undeniable, the claims which foreigners have on our consideration, as accurate and philosophic observers of our character and manners, in a *national point of view*. I speak not of them as of writers contemplating us as a part of the great family of man, modified by circumstances.

That is a pretension to which they seldom soar. In their productions, there are to be found but few vigorous efforts of this combined style of writing.

Those travelling writers remind me of another class of travellers,—your travelling bagmen.

The first thing which the latter do, when they come into a considerable town, is to run about for orders, making their memoranda, as they go from shop to shop. And in proportion to the number of orders they get, so they consider their day well spent, or otherwise. They then collect in convivial gossip, at night; and having discussed all about cloths, calicoes, and yarns (some of them very long) they run, in contentious and eloquent debate, over the elaborate topics contained in the newspapers of the day.

Just so your *move-about* litterateur; and especially your foreign one. Let us suppose him to be in Glasgow; he hurries over breakfast, as fast as the bagman; like him, he looks at his watch every five minutes; he rings again and

again for his tardily-brought toast and muffins ; he scolds Boots for being so long with his boots ; and he grudges himself the half hour required by the claims of appetite to allay the cravings of nature.

He brushes his coat and hat in a hurry ; and out he sallies, with Boots junior as his companion and guide, to see the city of Glasgow ; to remark upon its traffic, edifices, institutions, inhabitants, and upon the enormous strides which scientific industry is making in her multifarious walks. All these important points are jotted down in a journal, which, being revised and corrected, is, at a subsequent period, to be reluctantly given to the press.

Suppose your traveller to be a Frenchman, come across the Channel on a two months' tour, with a small stock of English got up for the occasion, and alarmed at every moment that passes without a jot in his memorandum-book.

He thus initiates his parley with Boots junior.



*Frenchman* : “ Monsieur Boots, quelle rue—  
what street is dis ? ”

*Boots* : “ The Gorbals, sir.”

*Frenchman* : “ De Gobbles ; qu’est que ça,  
wat is dat ? ”

*Boots* : “ I dinna ken, sir.”

*Frenchman* : Bête, stupid ; no know de mean-  
ing of de street : remarquez ça : il ne sait, peut-  
être, pourquoi on l’apelle “ Boots.” Monsieur  
Boots : vy dey call you “ Boots ? ”

*Boots* : “ Becuz a clean the boots, and gang  
messages.”

*Frenchman* : “ Ah, well ; he more adroit than  
I did not believe ” (taking out his Glasgow  
guide). “ Were de University, Monsieur Boots ? ”

*Boots* : “ University, sir ?—I dinna ken what  
ye mean.”

*Frenchman* : “ Bête : Ecossais : Ce gens-là  
sont vraiment stupides. L’Universite, je dis ;  
were de young gens taught to read Greek.”

*Boots* : “ —Oo’ the College, ye mean ? ”

*Frenchman* : “ Yes, yes, de College ; go dere.”

*Boots (to himself)*: “ I fancy this man’s a scholar ; bit, gif he is, he speaks a queer langidge.”

*Frenchman* : “ Wat dat you say ? ”

*Boots* : “ Naething, sir. Here’s the College.”

*Frenchman* : “ Go in, donc, and tell the professeur that one foreign gentleman wish to see de College of Glazcow.”

*Boots (returning)* : “ The maister says that he canna’ be fashed the noo ; for he’s hearing his class.”

*Frenchman* : “ Voyez que ce sont des Bêtes que ces Ecossais-la.”

*Boots* : “ He says, gif ye’ll come the morn’s mornin’ at nine o’clock, ye can see’d.”

*Frenchman* : “ I vill *not* come to-morrow ; to-morrow I go to Edinburg (remarquez). Ce college n’a rien de respectable, pas même son exterieur. On dit que les Ecossais ne comprennent pas le Grec. Allons, Monsieur Boots, a la Bourse, we go Shange.”

*Boots* : “ ’Deed, sir, I think ye hae muckle

need o't; for it's a wat day; an' ye've come out without an umbrella."

*Frenchman*: "Wat de brute say? Pitoyable de moi; voyageur malheureux! Sirrah, Sir Boots: I want see de Shange, where de people shange money, and read de papers, and shell sugar."

*Boots*: "Oo! that's the Exching, may be, ye mean?"

*Frenchman*: "Yes—Yes—de Ekshynge; diable cette langue Anglaise. Chacun a sa façon de parler, et de prononcer; le Dictionnaire dît, Ekshange; Boots dit, Ekschynge."

Having got to the "Exchange," our French tourist walks, and stares about; he wonders at the mass of newspapers there outspread, of every one of which he takes down the title. He then looks at all the *affiches*, and is astonished at the eager anxiety with which Lloyd's List is scanned. His little knowledge of English is confounded by Glasgow idiom and twang; till perplexed at length by the hum and clatter of

broad Scotch, and seeing every body attending to his own business without even a passing bow to a foreigner, he leaves the "Ekshainge" under a never to be forgotten feeling of the selfishness and "want of *politesse* of de Scotch." Still, he has patience to visit the Lunatic Asylum, the Botanical Gardens, the Assembly Rooms, one or two of the churches, a spinning factory, and a calico or muslin warehouse.

Out of these and a few other raw materials the Frenchman spins the thread of day after day's narrative; and on much consideration and reflection, he determines to manufacture the whole into a book.

From books thus made take, by way of illustration, a few extracts, which are faithfully given from a work, lately published on England by a Frenchman.

"Dinner," says our traveller, "consists of fish, roast meat, chiefly beef, veal, lamb or mutton, of beefsteaks *au naturel*, of potatoes, and other vegetables boiled in water, and served

without any other sauce than melted butter ; to which you are left to impart a flavour by means of pepper, allspice, bad and insipid vinegar, drugged with aromatics, or with some other barbarous preparation of English invention. You seldom see a fowl on an English table, the humidity of the climate being very injurious to the rearing of poultry . . . . .

“ If in a few private houses you find occasionally a bad and insipid soup served, of which gammon and a hough of veal form the base, you never see even this at an ordinary, although, with a few exceptions, there is little difference between living at an inn and in a private house.

“ Every traveller takes at a separate table in the evening his grog or his tea ; to which he sometimes adds a slice of *Roast Beef*.”

We have now, from our observing journalist, so minute a list of the price of every article called for at an inn, as makes it quite apparent that his bills must have formed no small part of his study of England, and of its inhabitants.



Then comes his definition of *waiter*, *chambermaid*, *boots*, and *hostler*.

“*Waiter*, is the man or woman servant who attends to all you want to eat and drink.

“*Chambermaid*, is the femme de chambre.

“*Boots*, is the drudge of the inn, deriving his name from his profession; for boots, which it is his business to clean, signify, in French, bottes.

“*Hostler* is neither more nor less than the stable-boy.”

We are next told that “boarding-houses are frequented by people of the best society, and that the lady of the house does the honours of the table.”

But a little to elevate the subject, I shall shortly follow the French tourist to Oxford. He tells us that having passed a few weeks in London, he took his departure for Alma Mater; and here, a good deal abridged, is his account of it:—

“Furnished with letters of introduction to

several students, I arrived at Oxford. It is scarcely possible to conceive my sensations on entering this monotonous city, with its ancient and sumptuous edifices, but solitary and lugubrious streets.

“ My heart sickened as I beheld them. Willingly would I at once have quitted this necropolis of science, in spite of all the attractions of novelty. But my desire was ardent to study the strange manners of the black and fantastic gentry that I saw wandering about in silence, muffled in a species of short cloak, or robe of lawn, hanging loosely over their dress, their head being ensconced in a cap without a visor, but yet ornamented (as they considered it) with a long silk tassel, and a large quadrangular top. My curiosity, therefore, triumphed (continues the Frenchman) over my first painful impressions ; and I speedily hied me to the rooms of Mr. E. K., a student of divinity in Christ Church College.”

After a minute list of furniture, apparatus, ornaments, and caricatures observed in the

student's room, we are let into the secret that there was also there a *tea-kettle*; and of this utensil our traveller remarks that throughout England it "gaily sends forth its murmuring steam, at once in the drawing-room of the prince, and in the cobbler's stall; that it is the first part of furniture ever bought, the last ever dispensed with."

In Mr. E. K.'s room there sat eight students of the university, surrounded by all the paraphernalia of a wine and cigar party. This scene quite astonished the Frenchman, being so different from any he had seen in France, where "they manage these things better."

He thought he was to be introduced to so many "Catos of eighteen," but he was obliged to relinquish this theory; for, he adds, "I had scarcely been initiated into conversation among these grave personages, when I found that they spoke of nothing but horses and the chase. . . .

"The time is passed at Oxford in horse-racing, fishing, rowing, archery, chapel routine,

or in drinking good wine and milk punch. The time that remains, if any there be, is given to study; but this is the last thing that engages the anxiety of the student."

The Frenchman was terribly affronted at its being supposed he did not understand Latin; and while *he* exhausted his ingenuity in endeavouring to ascertain the nature of the studies and laws of the University, the only two questions put to *him*, in company of the "eight Catos," were these: "Have they any fox-chases in France?" and "Are the French still great frog-eaters?"

"Great was my astonishment," says the Frenchman, with a naïveté curiously illustrative of his incompetence to scan the character of the society in which he was, "great was my astonishment to be asked two such questions; but it was not half so great as theirs, upon learning that we very seldom ever had such a thing in France as a fox-chase."

In regard to what he calls the old English

prejudice "that the French are epicures in frog's flesh," the French author feels himself bound, for the honour of his country, to combat it ; and now he gets upon a subject (that of gormandizing), with which he is evidently familiar, (what Frenchman is not ?) he is much more graphic and recherché than when he endeavours to discuss English questions.

"I think," he says, "I yet see the amazement with which my young auditors listened to me, as I unfolded to them my culinary erudition."

"The greater part of Frenchmen," I said to them, 'have not only never eaten frogs, gentlemen, but our cookery is in all respects more varied and delicate than yours. Take a few examples.

"You do not generally eat eggs dressed in more than three ways, eggs on a slice of bread, eggs in an omelette, and eggs in pudding. Now our French cooks vary every day their mode of cooking eggs. Like you, we have eggs on slices of bread, in omelette, and in pudding



(œufs au lait); but our omelette is not always a *plain* omelette. We have the omelette with fine herbs, the omelette with sugar and confectionery, kidney omelettes, omelettes sufflées or inflated omelettes, mushroom omelettes, snow omelettes, and omelettes a la chemise blanche. Then for eggs, we have beaten eggs, poached eggs, fried eggs, eggs burnt in the saucepan, and eggs done with cheese, cream, &c.

“ ‘ But I should never finish if I were to enumerate to you the infinite variety of French dishes. Let what I have said on this subject suffice.’ ”

The Frenchman confesses that he was listened to, in his discourse, not only with a patience, but with a *goût*, which he had not extended to the discourse upon the fox-chase, or the frogs.

He concludes his short and amusing account of Oxford by referring his readers to the grotesque ceremony described by Molière of the admission of Argant to the degree of Doctor\*.

\* “ Savantissimi Doctores,  
Medicinæ Professores.  
Qui hîc assemblati estis,” &c. &c.

The traveller avows himself unable to decide whether the ridicule poured by the great French dramatist, upon the ceremony of taking a degree in France, was not equally merited by the similar ceremony which he had witnessed at Oxford.

These quotations from the French author's work shall suffice : for though he has been both inquisitive, and communicative about London carriages, coal, shops, gas, squares, parks, markets, police, navigation, steam-boats, omnibuses, and especially breweries, I must refer those who desire information on such novel and elaborate subjects, to the catalogue of them, inserted in lengthened detail in the pages of the French traveller.

To me the theory seems not sound, that foreign travellers can give a better account of us than we can of ourselves.

If I were asked who is the most successful writer of the present day, in this line of exhibiting human character, as modified by national, I should answer, with thousands of others, I suppose, "Boz." He especially shines in that run

of character, to which he has peculiarly turned his observation, and on which he has so triumphantly exercised his genius. This is at once sparkling and acute, caustic and playful : it combines, with powers of generalization the most comprehensive, a study of particulars the most minute, and a talent of description which raises, alternately, feelings of the deepest sympathy, and the most ludicrous associations. He can attune to his own humour alike the lady and her maid, the philosopher and the clown ; the coachman and the gentleman who sits beside him on the box.

Where and when shall we ever find a French, a Prussian, or a German Boz ? No where, nor any sooner than we are likely to see an English Juvenal, or read the works of a Russian Horace.

But let us not forget, in our panegyric of Boz, because in a given line of literature the rising star of the present day, the great sun which having run his course in a still higher sphere than that of the author of *Oliver Twist*, often “dipped,” to use a nautical phrase, “in the same horizon,” and brightened it with colours as goodly

and as glowing as ever proceeded from the brilliant pencilling of even Boz.

Where shall we find the foreign author of a "Meg Merrilies," of a "Baillie Nicol Jarvie," of a "Rob Roy," or of a "Jeannie Deans?" No where. To find any such, we must not only wait, perhaps, for centuries, but never dream of finding them out of our own isle. Sir Walter Scott, in his day and generation, was in legendary lore, and in portraiture of character, what the greatest Bard of antiquity, Homer, was in his.

Two remarks offer themselves for consideration on this subject.

The first is, that most foreign travellers in England turn to mere *Lionizers*, pretty much as Englishmen do when they go abroad for the purpose of being able to become authors on their return. Like children who come from the country to London, this large class of travellers go directly to the Tower, then to Wombwell's collection of wild beasts, then to a pantomime, and last of all to see a balloon rise from Vauxhall.

The second remark is, that such books bear evidence upon every page of them, that they never were intended for the perusal, much less could ever aspire to the edification, of the people, whose characters, manners, and customs they nevertheless profess to portray. These characters become unintelligible in the hands of the foreign writer, whenever he would generalize from them, and perfectly absurd, when he would give the portraiture of individuals in detail. In the midst of many curious specific blunders, foreigners can vouch certainly for the accurate enough description, on the whole, of St. Paul's, of Guildhall, and of the Mansion House; of the Bank, Buckingham Palace, the outside of the clubs, and sometimes the inside of Devonshire House.

But when you have got this, or something like it, you have got their all; and of this all the most that can be said is, that while the Frenchman's book about England, the Englishman's book about France, and the American's book about both countries, may minister statistical



information, and convey some superficial idea to their respective countrymen of the mere *manners* of the foreign country which they attempt to describe, all that is interesting in general character, all that is peculiar in national, like the morning cloud and the early dew, evaporates from the brain of the foreign writer, without, as in the case of physical evaporation, leaving much that is clear behind.\*

In the following pages an attempt is made to describe characters, English and Scotch, as they are; and if the effort fail, I cannot plead that the failure has arisen from lack of time and opportunity to observe.

But I am aware that a good deal more than this is required for the graphic delineation of men and manners, and I commit myself into the hands of that public, which must, from the nature of the case, find for me, in the end, a verdict of “guilty,” or “not guilty,” of obtrusion.

\* I must be here understood as speaking strictly of foreigners who, after a short residence, sit down to write of the country to which they have paid their hurried visit.

## CHAPTER II.

Solomon is born into the World—Troubles connected with his Baptism, in consequence of his Mother's want of punctuality, and of Dr. Hasty's excess of it—The character and habits of that Gentleman; and his mode of conducting himself before and after the ceremony he was called upon to perform—A Christening Dinner-party in Scotland.

SOLOMON SEESAW was the son of respectable parents, but neither they nor himself had much pretension to the wisdom which distinguished the great man from whom our hero derived his name. After a short, and more amicable contest than usual about this said name, the father, as the weaker vessel, yielded to the authority of his better half; and their first-born was christened *Solomon*, in the presence of many relatives and friends of the

family. The ceremony was performed by Doctor Hasty, himself a distant relative of Mrs. Seesaw.

The bustle of a christening in the land of Scotia is no small affair on any occasion, but on the present it was one of peculiar interest and excitement. In the first place, Solomon was the eldest-born of Mr. and Mrs. Seesaw, and they thought it, therefore, indispensable to make a fuss among all the people of their acquaintance. The mother of Solomon was *ever* in a bustle, but the additional stir of that day made no small difference even to her. Like all bustling people she was generally behind her time, and this result of bad management, it will be seen, produced, on the day of the christening, no small confusion. Then, Mr. Seesaw was rather testy, and gave rise to a great deal of unnecessary discord by the declaration of his *hatred* of all bustle. But the most formidable party in producing the excitement, and increasing at once the

hubbub and confusion of the day, was Doctor Hasty. He was a minister of peace, though not always a peaceful man: he was fain to break the peace, especially when people were not exact in their appointments with him. From long indulged habit, a rather powerful position in the church, a petulant, and perhaps crusty temper, together with a feeling that not to be punctual with him was a personal insult, the Doctor was sometimes not very bearable. His watch was never in his fob for two minutes at a time: he counted his steps, measured his visits, ate his meals, performed, in short, all his functions like a man, as he was, of clock-work. Ever on the gallop, except when fairly seated to a good dinner, Doctor Hasty seemed to be running a constant race against time. Not an acquaintance or friend that he had ever ventured to stop him in the street; and being a little near-sighted, he was continually knocking over boys and girls that were in his way on the

pavement. When he reached a house five minutes before his time (he was never one instant behind it), he waited scrupulously at the door till the hour appointed, and then rat-tat-tat went his rather imperious knock, and up boiled his spirit if there were a moment's delay in giving him admission. His dress was a three-corner cocked-hat, over powdered hair, a black coat with large outside pockets, and flaps that, coming well forward, reached half-way down his calf. Over the coat there was a blue spencer (or long jacket), while the Doctor's nether parts were graced with black breeches, dark-grey worsted stockings, thick shoes, and short gaiters. His bands were large, and broadly hemmed: there depended from under a long black waistcoat, with pockets almost as large as those of his coat, a bunch of seals, at the end of a massive chain. Active and erect, though well stricken in years, he shuffled along at a prodigious pace, without the aid of a stick. But as he



was out, and out on foot, in all weathers, he carried, and carried invariably, under his left arm, with his left hand on the top of it, a brown, and something worse for the wear, cotton umbrella: it was as well known as his own person.

His watch, and the contents of a massive silver snuff-box, engrossed alternately his attention, as he rather ran than walked along. This snuff-box he managed with marvellous dexterity, opening it, taking out his pinch, closing it, and depositing it in his huge pocket, all with his unoccupied hand; the other, as aforesaid, being on the handle of his umbrella.

The hour appointed for the christening of Solomon was two o'clock; but he was far from being *presentable* at that hour.

The milliner had neglected to send the christening-cap, with its decorations; the nurse was despatched for it, and she, being unwieldy, could not exactly perform, in five minutes, a distance which a nimble chamber-maid could not

achieve in a quarter of an hour. The housemaid was therefore sent after the nurse, the foot-boy after the house-maid, and at the fatal moment of two o'clock,—when the doctor's hand, under the guidance of his vigorous arm, was applied to the knocker, with a reiteration loud and decided, proportioned to his own impatience, and to the importance of the occasion,—behold there was no servant in the house but the cook, to open the door.

She was basting a roast, and rightly thinking it no part of her duty to answer the door,—even to Doctor Hasty, about whose knock there was *no mistake*,—remained at her post.

Loud and louder became the thunder at the door, and without a moment's intermission, till two of Solomon's maiden aunts, more fearful even of the Doctor's ire, than of a breach of decorum, rushed out of the drawing-room, where the party were assembled. The one ran to the kitchen to scold the cook, while the other, with fear and trembling, and with a dozen

apologies upon her pale lips, opened the door to the almost infuriated Doctor.

Here followed from under the cocked hat and knit brow of this pious man denunciations loud, long, and not quite compatible with his vocation. Then came the vehemence of the cook, by no means subdued by the consideration that she was interfered with by one who was not her mistress. In, at this moment, came the nurse, the house-maid, and the foot-boy, each complaining that one should have been sent after the other, and all dilating on the want of consideration of their mistress.

Then came the milliner, with the ill-fated cap, full of anxiety lest it should be crumpled; and last of all, just emerging from his dressing-room, came, bowing in the most appeasing of attitudes, the father himself of Solomon.

The hubbub which ensued in the hall is neither conceivable nor to be described; but little would this, or anything else have availed to appease Doctor Hasty, unless the uppermost,



Doctor Harty comes to christen Solomon.







the ever-recurring, or rather the never-absent thought of the standard of time, by which he measured everything, had come in aid of a momentary truce.

“Pray, Doctor,” said Mr. Seesaw, “*do* let me take your hat.”

“*Do*, dear Doctor,” added Solomon’s elder aunt, “give me your umbrella.”

“Kind Doctor,” reiterated the second aunt, “pray let me help you off with your spencer.”

Instead of acknowledging the well-meant civility of either the master of the house, or of his maiden sisters, the Doctor mechanically drew his watch from his fob, and seeing that it was ten minutes past two,—that is, ten minutes after the hour appointed for the christening,—he flung down on the hall table, without the proffered assistance, his hat, his gloves, and his umbrella. Disencumbering himself, then, in no very ceremonious fashion, of his spencer, he demanded to be led to the drawing-room. The first thing he said when

he got there, and without taking notice of a single member of the assembled company, was, “ Well, where is the child ? ”

Fortunately, at this moment, in walked Mrs. Seesaw, followed by the nurse, who carried in her arms, and in triumphant state, the all-important Solomon. He was decked out in the prodigious finery of a train, pendent from nurse’s arms to the ground, of a crimped cap, adorned with lace, and with innumerable knots, and bows of white ribbons. He shut his eyes (the little innocent), as he was brought into the glare of the light ; but he knit his brows, which made some of the standers-by exclaim,

“ What an *intelligent*-looking child ! ”

Doctor Hasty was at length so far appeased, as to be persuaded, after his fatigue, and before commencement of the ceremony, to take two glasses of port wine, and two pieces of short-bread and bun. He now condescended to good-natured remonstrance (at least it was so for him) on the evil effects of want of

punctuality ; and he philosophically appealed to his relative, Mrs. Seesaw, whether she would not be confounded, if God were to delay the sun's rising till eight o'clock, when the almanacs appointed him to be up at six ?

Mrs. Seesaw acquiesced, confessing that she was no scholar, and never looked into the almanac except to see when it was to be dry or wet.

Things being thus smoothed, and the Doctor's heart not a bit the colder for the two glasses of port he had taken, the ceremony was proceeded with. Solomon was transferred from the nurse's arms to his father's. Mr. Seesaw drew himself up ; the nurse held a basin of pure water in her hands, and a damask napkin over her arms ; the assembled guests formed into a semicircle around the interesting spectacle ; the Doctor unbent the severity of his brow, and sprinkling the first hopeful shoot of the family with cold water,

"Solomon," said the Doctor, "I baptize thee in the name," &c. Hereupon Solomon whimpered, and raising and shaking his little red fists, began, even at this early age, to develop the organ of combativeness.

After a pious discourse, which though at variance with his "punctuality"-temper, became towards the end rather impressive, the Doctor offered up a prayer; to the effect that Solomon junior might approximate to Solomon senior in wisdom, in wealth, and in the knowledge of Him "who giveth freely, and reproacheth not."

The ceremony being thus happily concluded, Doctor Hasty had two more glasses of wine. No sooner were they taken, than out came his watch, which every body understood to mean "Where is the dinner?"

Fortunately the hubbub of the hall had created so profound an impression upon the cook, that she was for once punctual; and at

three o'clock just as the Doctor was looking a second time at his watch, dinner was announced.

Auspicious moment ! Doctor Hasty's severe countenance relaxed into a positive smile ; and gracefully offering his arm to Mrs. Seesaw, he led the way to the banquetting-room. This was on all occasions to him the most agreeable part of the house ; but never so agreeable as when the pleasures of the repast were regulated by a strict regard to punctuality.

Whenever he thought the bottle ought to be circulated, he took out his watch ; and that was at an interval of five minutes precise. Woe betide the vice-president if he stopped the port in *transitú* ; especially if the Doctor happened to be on his *left*. And this he generally was, because, from respect to his station, he was mostly placed at the president's *right*. The watch, when the bottle was stopped, had no rest, and seldom did it happen that a croupier was so obtuse as not to under-



stand the second pulling out of the hour-glass, especially if accompanied by Doctor Hasty's too intelligent glance at the intercepted decanter.

The health of young Solomon having been drunk, and, with repeated libations, many good things hoped for him, the Doctor looked at his chronometer, and finding not only that it was eight o'clock, but that, considering his cloth, he was replenished to the very verge of decorum with both solids and liquids, he made a literal bolt from his company, hurried on his spencer, grasped his umbrella, found a place for his cocked hat on his hot and rather confused head, and without saying "with your leave, or by your leave,"—without going to the drawing-room to see the ladies,—he gave his company the cut direct.

In consequence of some angular motion by the way, he arrived at his manse five minutes after his time; and, next Sunday, he made his parishioners feel his unequivocal dissatisfac-

tion with his own mistake, by reading them an angry lecture, on the text, "There is a time for every thing." He only got rid of his own bad humour by pouring the vials of his dissatisfaction upon his congregation.

After the Doctor had taken his departure from Mr. Seesaw's, many did in his absence what none dared to do in his presence. In not over Christian-like terms, one accused him of being an impetuous man, another of being a glutton, and a third of being a wine-bibber; but Mr. Seesaw, calling the company to order, reminded them that Doctor Hasty was the man who had that day christened his son Solomon. In a short time the male guests showed that they were at least as much wine-bibbers as the worthy Doctor; and the female ones, begging to have a last view of dear little Solomon, were permitted by Mrs. Seesaw to visit his cradle. They pronounced upon him, while he lay asleep, encomiums which his great namesake, in his waking moments, would have

blushed to hear. "Oh the darling cherub!" said one; "How like his papa!" said another; "What sagacity!" said a third; "How beautiful!" said a fourth; till even Mrs. Seesaw, with all her facility of credence on so alluring a topic, begged they would come away, and leave the little innocent to his slumbers.

Off staggered the gentlemen, and off went their wives; those who could afford it in hackney-coaches, and those who could not, on "shanks naggie."

When all was still, Mr. and Mrs. Seesaw sat down in mutual congratulation on the manner in which the day had "gone off;" and agreeing, for once, to sink in oblivion all mutual injuries, they went to rest by the side of the cradle of their cherub, Solomon, not like man and wife, but like turtle-doves.

### CHAPTER III.

Solomon proves too much for the Nurse, and is the cause of frequent controversy between Mr. and Mrs. Seesaw—Upon the unanswerable arguments of this Lady, the family of the Seesaws is transferred to Crabtree Cottage, in the vicinity of Dullborough—Solomon is sent to School,—There examined by Mr. Hammerin, the Master, and pronounced a booby.

I AM not aware that the history of even Solomon, king of Judea, had the scribes given it to us from the time of his being wrapped in swaddling clothes, would have been of much interest till he went to school.

It is true that in such a case we might have learnt something more than we now know of Jewish nurseries, nurses, and mammas; and possibly, (as in the case of Hector, and of young Astyanax,) we might have seen David putting

off his helmet to kiss the hope of his house. We should perhaps have seen the "mighty man of war" sowing, even in the infant mind of his son and destined heir, the incipient seeds of that sagacity which, matured, led him at a subsequent period, to ask of God, as the greatest gift he could bestow—"wisdom."

This, however, would have been an exception to the general rule. The ordinary modes of developing mind, of training thought, and of instilling principles are, in these enlightened days, so much a matter of routine, that to repeat them, in any particular instance, were stale and unprofitable. The nurse exercised her usual privilege of indulging her charge till he knew perfectly well how to get everything he wanted by setting up a scream. When he passed from the nurse's care to that of mamma, mamma found his habits much too confirmed to admit of her wrestling with them, especially as she was what is called a "kind and indulgent mother." When Solomon attained his



third year, he was brought into more frequent intercourse with his father, who always professed a great dislike to very young children. The father being not less fastidious than the mother was fond, frequent altercations arose on the subject (on what subject did they not? but especially on the subject) of Solomon's training and education. Before this promising youth had attained his fourth year, he perceived that as regarded his own important personage, there was a schism in the house. When mamma scolded him, he ran to papa; and when papa frowned, he took shelter in the lap of mamma. Each parent, on such occasions, felt a triumph in the refuge sought by Solomon under the wings of the other: so that the young gentleman might be said already to have become umpire between his father and mother. If he had stopped here, it would have been allowable; but scarcely was he out of petticoats, when by the preference which he extended alternately

to one parent over the other, he became the originator of many family feuds. By the time Solomon was eight years of age, he had become master of the house, on the principle of "divide and conquer." I do not say that his mind was so far trained as to enable him to act upon this principle as an axiom ; but certain it is, that by a sagacious, if not scientific process of induction from repeated, and successful experiments, Solomon came to the conclusion that he was Lord Paramount in Crabtree Cottage. That was the name of a rural retreat, which after a world of argument, carried through all the figures and modes of remonstrance, disapproval, contradiction, excitement, passion, vehemence, violence, and foot-stamping, the wife triumphantly succeeded in compelling the husband to take, for the benefit of air and education.

"Country air," said Mrs. Seesaw, "is indispensable to my health ; for what wi' the

cares connected wi' a family o' eight bairns—lookin' after and teachin' ignorant servants, cooking, often wi' sma' thanks, for a fastidious husband,—to say naething o' the impossibility o' gettin' claes properly washed or dried in a large town,—my spirits are worn out, my constitution is impaired,—and it's a gracious Providence only that has keepit my temper frae bein' soured."

"Upon my honour," said Mr. Seesaw, sarcastically, "a very sweet temper, indeed: really a sweet temper, my love, when you have everything your own way; no one to offer any objection to your schemes; but, on the contrary, with oily words to persuade you that all you do is admirable: ha! ha! ha!"

"Such words," said Mrs. Seesaw, "were precisely those you employed before you gained my consent to marry: Oh! how I rue that day," she retorted, half in a fit of passion, and half in one of romance.

"Well, well, my dear," said the husband,

“perhaps there is no love lost; but you have such a tendency to run from your subject. What were you going to say about education? One of your reasons for taking Crabtree Cottage was that you might have the benefit of living in the vicinity of Mr. Hammerin’s school, at Dullborough.”

“I understand very weel,” said Mrs. Seesaw, “the purport o’ your sneer, an’ though there’s nae doot ye’re a clever man, yet there’s as little that ye’re a gae’ conceited ane. But I fancy, for a’ that, ye’ll scarcely gang the length o’ comparin’ your talents an’ learnin’ wi’ Mr. Hammerin’s, honest man, the maister o’ Dullborough school. Na, na. He’s teachin’ Latin an’ Greek an’ accounts a’ day, an’ he’s followed his vocation for twa score years. I was payin’ a visit to the manse the ither day, an’ he was tellin’ the minister, just in his ain simple way, that he gaed at sixteen to be helper to Mr. Maribus, an’ that frae that time to this he’s scarcely ever had a Latin book out o’ his

hand. Then they said a great deal to ane anither about some learned men o' the name o' Vairgill, an' Horish, an' Saulist, an' Leevie, an' Tassydus; but the maist edifyin' part o' a' was to hear the twa worthy men reasonin' out o' the scriptures. It was nae easy to tell, except by their coats, which was the maister, and which was the minister.

“ So, Mr. Seesaw, wi' a' my ignorance, I ken't very weel what I was about when I determined to pit the laddies to Mr. Hammerin's school, whar they'll hae the benefit o' bein' examined every year by the heritors o' the kirk, an' the Reverend Mr. Deavehim. As for the lassies, there's a famous dancin'-school at Dullborough, carried on by Mr. Golightly, an' a blin' fiddler,—wi' the advantage that the fiddler gies lessons on the pianae at by-hours to private pupils. Then there's an excellent day-school for young leddies, keepit by Miss Tiptop, that failed in the millinery business, and has, in this way, the advantage o' bein'



able to teach that, in addition to the ither branches o' a usefu' and ornamental education. There's a writin'-school for boys and girls, shuperintended by Mr. Wagginwatty; an' though his head gangs like ane o' the 'Talian images made o' wax, yet he writes a han' like copper-plate. There's good caller air, and plenty o' pleasant walks for exercise. So that again ye see, Mr. Seesaw, though I say it, ye may thank your stars that ye hae a wife that taks so many things into consideration before she taks a step,—that looks before she louns, gude-man. It would be tellin' some o' her learned frien's if, wi' a' their learnin', they 'did just the same thing."

Here the usual controversy followed, till the argument was vehemently wound up by Mrs. Seesaw to that climax, beyond which the husband knew it was in vain to attempt to push his opposition. He gave in, as usual, and Mrs. Seesaw triumphed, as usual. All the preconcerted arrangements for education

were carried into full effect by the head (I need not say who was the head) of the family; and the Seesaws, old and young, at the time of which I write, were located in Crabtree Cottage, in the vicinity of the aforesaid town of Dullborough.

Dullborough consisted of one long wide street, forking at one end of it into two narrow ones, and flanked along its whole course in a parallel direction by a confined lane, to which the inhabitants gave a designation that may not appear in print. The town was a weekly market-town, and had no police, but that afforded by numerous flocks of pigeons and sparrows, which, being early risers, carried off betimes in the morning the grain in the streets,—leaving to a dozen old women and as many tattered children a monopoly of what remained. It was the useful article of manure, which being wheeled, carried in aprons, or gathered up in rotten baskets, according to the circumstances of the monopolists,

was built up at their respective doors, in the said narrow lane, within a semi-circle of stones. It then constituted that useful species of property yclept by the inhabitants of Dullborough "*middens*," for which they were said to have a great partiality.

Dullborough boasted of two inns, and of a small, dilapidated, old-fashioned kirk of red stone without, and laid with cold damp flags within. From the wall there oozed a green and slimy mould; and the seats were of common plank, which having never been painted, and rarely washed, looked very greasy and black. They did no more than correspond, however, with the well-thumbed Bibles and Psalm-books devoutly spread out before the spectacled noses, male and female, of the rigid Presbyterians. Three seats, and three alone, were lined with baize: that of the worthy baronet, Sir Humphrey Longacre, who lived hard by; that of the parish-minister, Mr. Deavehim; and that of the worthy dominie, Mr. Hammerin.

The rest of the aristocracy—that is, the doctor, the saddler, the ironmonger, the dancing-master, the grocer, the baker, the whiskey-merchant, chief butcher, tallow-chandler, bonnet lairds, and small farmers—were all content with their bare timber seats, and their hard timber bottoms.

Opposite to the national kirk, and no small eye-sore to its minister, stood a meeting-house of the Antiburgher persuasion, of which Mr. Drawlout, a licentiate of Stuffim Academy, had, after three competition sermons, with five opposing candidates, been elected pastor by the unanimous voice of his hundred-and-twenty parishioners. Upon a computation of the time taken up by the candidates in their respective discourses, it was found that the three sermons of Mr. Drawlout had occupied four hours more time than those of the next longest preacher on the list. This ascertained fact decided the election of the actual minister, it being remarked by Mr. Frost, the elder,—

“That, though there was gude soun’ doctrine in some o’ the ither discourses, an’ they wud na hae been sae badly aff wi’ Mr. Mushroom, the second on their list, yet it was nae to be denied that the preference was justly due (he meant nae reproach to ony man) to the man elect; for if he could preach to them sax hours on a Sabbath, an’ the ithers only four, was’t no’ evident that, wi’ as good edification, they were keepit by the Reverend Mr. Drawl-out twa hours mair out o’ harm’s way? An’ let us no’,” continued he, “deny that we’re a’ subject to temptation, even on the Lord’s day. Better to be sleepin’ i’ the house o’ God than idlin’ out o’t. We ken that there’s nane the deil’s sae ready to tak haud o’ as them he finds idlin’ awa’ their time on the Sabbath.”

Such was the community, to the neighbourhood of which Mrs. Seesaw had brought her family for the benefit of air and education.

Her first step (as has been already told) was to place our hero under the care and



tuition of Mr. Hammerin, and the first care of this staid, methodical, and persevering dominie of daily routine, was to put into his hands "Ruddiman's Rudiments." He forthwith began to question him about a verb.

Caught by the sound, "A verb's a verbal" answered Solomon. He had often heard his father talk of the shock his nerves received when he was forced to listen to Mrs. Seesaw's violation of all verbal—something, Solomon did not recollect that the word to be supplied was, "distinctions," or he would no doubt have answered that a verb was a "verbal distinction." Mr. Hammerin observed that his ignorance was great, the darkness in which he groped amazing; and calling up a boy, who had been eighteen months in the school, but who was younger and less than the new-comer Solomon, the dominie of Dullborough, in something not much short of triumph, initiated the following examination:—

Mr. Hammerin.—"What is a verb?"

Scholar.—“ A word that signifies to be, to do, or to suffer.”

Mr. Hammerin.—“ Whether do you conjugate or decline a verb ?”

Scholar.—“ I conjugate it.”

Mr. Hammerin.—“ Conjugate *amo*.”

Scholar.—“ *Amo, amavi, amatum, amare.*”

Mr. Hammerin.—“ Decline *Penna*, and lay emphasis on the vocative case.”

Scholar.—“ *Penna, pennæ, &c. Voc. O! Penna, Oh! A Pen.*”

“ That will do; you may sit down,” said Mr. Hammerin.

Mr. Hammerin had a significant side jerk of the head, capable of expressing, when aided by the countenance, every mode of thought and passion going on within. On the present occasion, the jerk was a gracious one to the scholar, and very much the reverse to Solomon. As for this latter, he stood confounded and abashed, by the learned superiority over himself of the precocious youth, who had just

undergone so successful an examination on matters so far beyond the knowledge of the namesake of the king of Jerusalem.

Solomon was next probed as to his attainments in writing and arithmetic, and when he confessed that in the former branch he had never got beyond single letters, nor in the latter could do more than write the figures, Mr. Hammerin added "And I suppose you cannot read English without spelling?" Here he was wrong, for Solomon could read English tolerably well; but it was an attainment held in small comparative estimation in Dullborough school; although in this respect it must be allowed that the master did no more, and he could not well do less, than follow the example set him by some establishments of a much higher order.

Mr. Hammerin now delivered himself to his discomfited pupil in an oration, of which the following is a pretty close transcript.

Mr. Hammerin.—"Solomon Seesaw, ye've

been examined wi' a' due impartiality on the merest rudiments o' the Latin tongue. It's clear that ye not only ken naething about it, but that ye're utterly deficient in a knowledge o' even English grammar. You have entirely failed to mak' out the definition o' a verb, an' I wud advise ye betimes to tak' example by the clever youth that's just ta'en his seat at the head o' his class, after tellin' ye a' about that important part o' speech.

“Your name implies some notion o' wisdom, but weel a' wat it's a sorry misnomer in your case.

“My sentence is that ye gang an' tak' the place o' booby on that form; it's occupied by the second-lowest class in the school; an' I can only hope that reflection, ambition, an' the remembrance o' your namesake, will work out, in their proper time, their proper fruits. Tak' as your text the fourth o' Proverbs, seeventh verse; “Wi' a' your gettin', get understandin'.”

Off was Solomon marched, "as booby," under the escort of the scholar who had so enlightened him as to the nature of a verb; and he took his station at the bottom of his class, in great and sullen dudgeon, strangely at variance with the imperious will, the high tone, and the commanding attitude ever assumed by him at home. He bore no great love to either father or mother for having placed him where he now found himself; and as for Mr. Hammerin, Solomon considered him the most impertinent, but yet most to be feared personage upon earth.

Many and strange were the thoughts that crossed his mind.

"What!" argued he, doubtingly, with himself, "is Mr. Hammerin mair than my father an' mother? An' have they ever dared to use me in this way?"

But neither Solomon's father nor mother kept a "*tawse*," or a ferula. They forgot the axiom of the great namesake of their not very



hopeful first-begotten, that "he who spareth the rod, hateth his son."

No wonder, therefore, that Solomon was in dudgeon; nor that, when he got out of school, he burst into a passionate fit of tears, and ran home boiling with indignation to Crabtree Cottage.

Here, for the present, we shall leave him, reserving the development of character elicited by these circumstances for the next chapter.

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## CHAPTER IV.

A sudden change takes place in Solomon's temper and conduct, which alarms the family—A brief account of Mr. Hammerin and his Scholars; among whom Solomon takes rank, to the surprise and self-congratulation of the Dominie—This personage being called to an interview, leaves the School in charge of Mr. Greenhorn, the Usher, who presently finds himself surrounded by Rebels—The interview.

FROM shame and impetuosity, in alternate fits of which Solomon trudged from school to Crabtree Cottage, now stopping a moment to stamp the ground in a rage with his foot, and anon indulging in bursts of tears for the indignity put upon him, he passed into a fit of sullen gloom and silence.

It was in vain that Mrs. Seesaw endeavoured

to elicit from him the cause of so extraordinary a change of conduct and of manner.

Ever vehement, he had heretofore given vent to his hasty and capricious temper without ceremony, and without restraint. He was in the habit of scattering or displacing everything that came to his hand in the room. Books flew one way, ottomans were kicked another; and on one occasion, because a canary bird was singing while he was in his passion, he seized the cage, flung it across the room, broke the water-bottle, spilled the seed, and sent consternation to the panting heart of the fluttering and innocent victim of his wrath.

In a few hours, as if by magic, all was changed; and, evidently in one of the worst humours in which he had been in his whole life, Solomon sat taciturn, sulky, and immovable. He had received so deep and unexpected an affront,—a shock so rude yet irresistible had been offered to his haughty, and, hitherto, uncontrolled temper, while this

was followed up by such evidence that in no other way could he take rank in the school than by turning from play to books, from self-indulgence to discipline and subordination, that a revolution, as brief as it was decided, had taken place in his inner man, shewing itself in the way described in his outer one.

That very night, to the no small surprise of Mr. and Mrs. Seesaw, he applied himself to his new rudiments bound in calf, and began to toil away over "*penna*," still in dogged sulkiness, but with an earnest and almost intense application, which as much astonished his father as it delighted his mother. Though entirely ignorant of what had happened, and of what was passing in Solomon's head and heart, Mrs. Seesaw thus addressed her spouse :

"Weel, I hope ye'll confess noo' that I ken't what I was about when I sent our son to Mr. Hammerin's? There ye see he's made a scholar o' him in yae day; an' may be before a month's gaen' by, the son will ken as muckle

about Latin as some o' his betters that's sae proud o' their acquaintance wi't."

Mr. Seesaw bowed sarcastic assent, and Mrs. Seesaw proceeded.

"Will ye just gang an' see if ye can mak out what's gawin' on in the laddie's mind? What's a' ye're learnin' worth if ye canna' turn't to practical account wi ye're ain son?"

Mr. Seesaw acquiesced, tried all his ingenuity upon Solomon, but could elicit from him no further speech than this, and this very doggedly spoken—"They've affronted me."

"Could ye no' argue him into some mair particulars than that o' what's ta'en place?" said Mrs. Seesaw.

"I could not," replied the husband; "from being boisterous, the fellow has turned absolutely mulish; and if you had a little penetration, you might now, perhaps, in this change of character and tone, see rather the effects of your own ill-timed indulgence, than of Mr. Hammerin's excellent teaching."



“ I dinna care,” said Mrs. Seesaw ; “ ye’re a’ wrang. I’m sure the laddie’s ta’en a turn for the better ; but it may be as weel to inquire o’ Mr. Hammerin himsel’ what has actually happened. I’ll gang an’ see him the morn’, an’ I’m sure to get at the bottom o’ the story ; for I ken that the school-maister is, if possible, a mair upright an’ honest, than he’s a learned an’ clever man.”

“ Well, well,” said Mr. Seesaw, tired as people *will* get of such domestic controversy, “ do what you like : you know you ever have had your own way ; and I suppose, to the end of the chapter, that you ever will have it.”

Meantime Solomon went to bed, having thumbed at an extraordinary rate the two parts of his rudiments in which he found the definition of a verb, and the declension of “ *penna*.” Against his usual practice, he was up by day-break, and again poring over his Latin exercises. He was pacing with measured step the room as the housemaid entered.

His finger was in the rudiments at *penna* ; and without appearing to notice the servant, he went on repeating aloud *penna*, *pennæ*, *pennæ*, *pennam*, till the simple Scotch woman thinking him mad, ran up stairs to the bedroom of Mr. and Mrs. Seesaw. She knocked in great fright at the door ; and being told to walk in, unfolded her awful tale, “ That for certain sure young Solomon was crackit.”

Mr. Seesaw put on his slippers and dressing-gown, and Mrs. Seesaw, in fear and trembling, followed him down stairs. They both rushed, in great agitation, into Solomon’s room ; and there, sure enough, they found him engaged as described by the housemaid.

“ What’s that your sayin’, Solomon,” asked the mother, always more quick and alarmed on such occasions than the father, “ what’s that your sayin’ about pens ?”

“ I’m sayin’ my lesson,” replied Solomon.

“ Foolish woman,” said Mr. Seesaw ; “ let

the boy alone: "he's studying his rudiments."

"I'll thank ye baith to gang awa'," interposed Solomon; "or as sure's *death* I'll no gang to the school the day."

"But, my man Solomon," said Mrs. Seesaw, soothingly, and still afraid that there was some thing wrong with her son's brain, "what's the use o' sittin' up sae late an' o' risin' sae early for the sake o' a little Latin? It 'll a' come in gude time; sae gang to your bed; an' sleep for an hour or twa."

"I'm learnin' my lesson," reiterated Solomon, sulkily.

"Do let him alone," entreated Mr. Seesaw, with a look of submissive appeal to his wife.

"Weel," said Mrs. Seesaw, "if ye're sure it's his rudiments he's studyin', an' that the words he's speakin' are nae jargon, we'll let him alane."

The parents retired: Solomon continued his lesson; and at eight o' clock, with his two or three English books and rudiments in a little

satchel, he marched off to school, evidently better pleased, though not more communicative, than he had been for the last sixteen hours.

He stumped along the road with a quick, emphatic step, and an air of real earnestness about him that the least observant passenger could scarcely fail to remark. His heart was still boiling with rage and discontent ; but his courage was amazingly increased, by the conviction that he had not only acquired a good deal more than Mr. Hammerin had enjoined, but that he should be able to "trap"\* the boy next above him in the class. Fired with this ambitious project, his quick walking pace turned into a trot ; his trot into a gallop ; and he arrived at Dullborough school in a reeking perspiration, and glowing ardour, half an hour before the school-hour.

It was in vain that he was invited to play a game at hand-ball, or at marbles, before the

\* "Trap" is a scholastic Scotticism, used to signify a boy's taking the place of those above him in his class.

“school gaed in.” “I winna’,” said he ; and he began again to decline to himself “*penna.*”

At length the school was opened ; and Mr. Hammerin entered.

A word about this venerable personage, before we introduce the reader to his second interview with our hero, Solomon.

Mr. Hammerin was in high authority among his sixty scholars. Of measured, slow, and even graceful gait and demeanour, he paced his wonted rounds, at once for exercise and observation, in the village and its environs. He kept a sharp eye on the boys he had just “let loose from school.” If a fray took place at marbles, or a real battle at the game of “French and English,” an instant dispersion of the combatants followed the master’s appearance in the distance. They that “held the bannets\*” took to precipitate flight ; and

\* Holding the “bannets ” means that when two Scotch pugilists enter the list, they are separated, during their boxing match, by two urchins who hold a handkerchief between them to prevent their actually falling foul of each other.



pugilists and spectators fled hither and thither.

There was an agreeable and useful mixture of kindness and severity in the often-scanned countenance of the dominie. While it encouraged exertion, and intimidated idleness, it left the wayward pupil sometimes at a loss to guess *what* was really passing within.

Occasionally a cloud would overshadow the schoolmaster's face, which, though it expressed only sorrow, was interpreted by the scholars as portending displeasure. On such occasions, more than ordinary assiduity was observable in the application to participles, pronouns, and verbs, in the incipient scholars, and to Tacitus, Virgil, and Horace, among those nearly ready for the learned university of Edinburgh.

The ferula, when used, was used with lenity. It was a long, black, leather thong, which curled itself into a sort of serpentine circle. In this form it was often thrown into the midst of some idle group, at a remote corner of the

school. It pounced upon them as a living and fearful witness that they had not eluded the glance of the master's all-seeing eye. Often would a dispute arise as to the precise number of idlers intended to be the bearers of the ferula (or tawse) to the hands from which it had been so dexterously launched.

This point adjusted, the culprits might be seen, moving in sad solemnity, and with due anticipations of punishment or fine, to the desk of authority. The marbles, which had superseded the study of Cornelius Nepos; the *papes* (or cherry-stones), which, dyed with various colours, filled the little bags of the happy possessors; buttons used in "pitch and toss;" balls for playing alternately at the "patties," and, being struck by the elastic cleckin'-board; all these, with many other schoolboy gewgaws, were piled in conspicuous heaps upon the master's elevated desk. They were a test, at once of his habits of observation, and a terror to evil-doers.

Such was the master, and such were the habits of Dullborough school.

Now for a few words about Solomon himself. He was active, persevering, bold, rather pugnacious, and urgent in the boyhood avocations of bustle and pride. He was a great breeder of rabbits and pigeons, remarkable for the number and size of his dragons (or kites), fond of "rowin girs,"\* carrying stones "in the sookers," searching for bird's nests, skating, "shinty playing," and shooting with bow and arrow.

He showed wonderful address in procuring what he wanted, "by hook or by crook." Not a carpenter was there in the neighbourhood who was not importuned for the "middle stick" of a kite, not a cooper that was not laid under contribution for a hoop. Grocers furnished brown paper and twine; plumbers gave lead wherewith to shoot sparrows and "yellow yites;" the farmer made him a present of a brace of pigeons, and some relative of a

\* Trundling hoops.

servant of the family of a brace of rabbits. Hallow-e'en was a great gala night for him. He dookit into the tub for apples, went boldly into the garden for cabbage-stocks, and burnt his mouth by a snap at the candle on one end of the stick in his effort to carry off the prize of the apple at the other. He delighted in carrying the bag of some sportsman, and still more, in stealing a ride upon some farmer's pony running unsaddled and unbridled in the field. He put a little rope into his mouth, threw himself nimbly over his back, and galloped as fast round the field as the swiftest of Ducrow's studs with the tailor riding to Brentford.

With these numerous avocations, it is not to be wondered at that Solomon should have a little neglected his learning.

The truth is, he had none to neglect ; and the very first time that he was ever seen seriously to apply himself to a book, was the occasion on which he returned from Mr. Ham-

merin's school with the hateful and unwelcome impression, "that he had been affronted."

The school opened; in rushed the boys; in came Mr. Hammerin; "An' stir up," said he, "they twa' fires. Classes first an' second, stan' up at them, an' warm your fingers."

Mr. Hammerin, labouring under a constitutional cough, now called up the lowest class in the room, and heard them their A, B, C. Then came the next lowest, and that was Solomon's.

To Mr. Hammerin's astonishment, his young pupil not only displayed much superiority of knowledge over that of yesterday, but actually moved three places higher up in his class. The Dominic being, like Sergius Paulus, not only a "prudent man," but a just one, remembered how sorely he had put Solomon to the blush the day before, and determined to make up for it on the present occasion.

There was in Mr. Hammerin's heart a



latent self-congratulation not uncommon either in the Dominies of country schools, nor in the tutors of universities: it is that of appropriating to themselves no inconsiderable share of the merit due to their pupil.

I have seen the tutor of a senior wrangler, even on the day which proclaims the proud achievement of his scholar, put on more airs than the scholar himself.

The first question asked is, "Who was his tutor?" And though the tutor has supplied neither the mind, the genius, nor the assiduity by which a rank more honourable than the term (*wrangler*), by which it is designated, has been attained, yet we know it is no new thing for the jackdaw to bedeck himself in the peacock's feathers.

Thus Oxford takes credit for having reared a Locke, a Canning, and a Peel; and Cambridge for having fostered a Milton, a Sir Isaac Newton, and even a Paley; as if those persons would not have turned out pretty much the same, no matter *where* educated.

Thus also did the master of Dullborough school not a little plume himself upon the wonderful progress made by Solomon, in the wonderfully short space of twenty-four hours.

Mr. Hammerin called his promising pupil, therefore, to the desk of authority ; and there, patting him on the head, and telling him he would yet be a scholar, gave him public satisfaction, for the public rebuke of the previous day.

Solomon's heart was now as much elated with pride and pleasure, as it had before been depressed by shame and misery : he began to like his master, to turn over the leaves of his book with some satisfaction, and with still more to reflect that he had established to demonstration that there were three greater dunces in the class than himself.

In the mean time Mrs. Seesaw, in her great anxiety about the state of her son's mind, sallied forth to an interview with Mr. Hammerin ; and just as Solomon's examination

was finished, a female servant-of-all-work informed the Dominie that "A leddy wanted to see him in the house."

Ever on the alert on such occasions, as ever expecting, from such visits, the addition of a pupil to the school, Mr. Hammerin, to the great joy of the class that he was, in technical phraseology, "hearin'," told them to "Sit down."

Mr. Hammerin pushed aside the "tawse" which he generally kept at his right hand when he was "hearin'" a class: he took off and laid down his spectacles; desired the usher ("helper," as he is called in Scotland) to preserve order, and sallied forth brimful of expectations that seven shillings and sixpence a quarter were about to be added to his not very ample income.

No sooner had he taken his departure than the uproar, chattering, confusion and irregularity which took place, showed how little of a

helper, in maintaining order, at least the "helper" was to his master.

Poor soul,—what could be expected from him, when after living upon salt herrings, meal and potatoes; after the expense of 25*l.* a year to a small farmer, or grocer, or publican, who all anticipated the making of their fortunes, or the perpetuating of their names by the abilities "o' the cleverest son o' the family," this son came to serve for such pay as he got?

Why, his salary was five pounds less than it had cost the ambitious, but mistaken parents of the youth to endeavour to produce a genius for the pulpit, the university, the medical profession, the writership to the signet, or (least successful and most precarious of all the learned professions in Scotland) the Bar.

A Scotch tutor, and a Scotch "helper," are characters so well understood to be very unpolished and commonplace, that there is

little to remark upon them but their-often ill-merited poverty.

No sooner had Mr. Hammerin disappeared, than three or four of the more unruly scholars, in defiance of all remonstrance on the part of Mr. Greenhorn, rushed out of the school: half a dozen began to fight within its walls; and the loud, constant and unruly appeal of "Da Veniam," "dav'nya'm," as it was pronounced, constrained Mr. Greenhorn to dismiss the school half an hour before the usual time.

This was a tacit license granted to him by Mr. Hammerin, to be exercised on occasions, when, being called to wait upon strangers, it was expected that some time might elapse before the arrangements regarding the admission of pupils could be adjusted, a glass of whiskey given to the parent, and a list made out of the elementary books, slates, slate pencils, pens and black-lead pencils, to be furnished by the Dominie.



All these preliminaries occupied in Dullborough a good deal longer time than they would in London; and although Mr. Hammerin was in the present instance disappointed of an additional pupil, he was not the less obliged to listen to Mrs. Seesaw's rather lengthened inquiries about her son Solomon.

I shall very much abridge the dialogue which passed; and I shall altogether pass over the rueful reflections which crossed the Dominie's mind, when, instead of a new customer, he beheld his already declared patroness of Crabtree Cottage.

"Gude mornin,'" said she, rising and shaking him cordially by the hand.

"Gude mornin,'" replied Mr. Hammerin. "It's rather inconvenient for me to receive visitors at school-hours; but Mrs. Seesaw shall never be an unwelcome guest at the house o' the school-maister o' Dullborough."

Mrs. Seesaw curtseyed, expressed the uneasiness in which she was about Solomon; hoped that Mr. Hammerin wudna' gie him o'er muckle at ance to undertake; and, above all, expressed her hope "that there was naething wrong wi' his head."

Mr. Hammerin not only assuaged the fears, and calmed the alarm of Mrs. Seesaw; but passed such a panegyric on her son as raised the teacher immeasurably in the estimation of the mother; sent the latter home in the state and with the gait of an inflated pigeon to exercise her proud strut, not as this bird does to woo his mate, but as he often does to bid defiance to his rival.

In cases in which her husband was concerned it was (a thing supremely to be lamented) not easy to pourtray Mrs. Seesaw by a comparison to any of the feminine species, so entirely did she exercise over him a masculine prerogative.

Solomon returned home, in many senses

of the word, except, perhaps, the right one, "a new creature."

The history of the change, and of its results, with other matter, we shall give in the next chapter.

## CHAPTER V.

Solomon gives hopes of his one day becoming a Scholar ; but his career under Mr. Hammerin is cut short by the sudden death of Mr. Seesaw—This catastrophe leads to the projected departure of the family from Dullborough ; which again leads to some account of that departure.

NOT to dwell longer on school-boy matters, I shall simply say, that whether from Mr. Hammerin's judicious system, or from Solomon's peculiar temper, impatient of affront, or from his rising ambition stimulated into more vivid action by the triumph of " turning down" three booby competitors for " honors ;" or whether from Mrs. Seesaw's sagacious, and Mr. Seesaw's learned inculcations ; or whether from an inexplicably aroused, though hitherto latent principle within him, Solomon was cer-

tainly inducted not only into a system of unquenchable application to his books, but his whole temper and manner were changed for the better. In six months he became dux; and for six years he continued dux of his class. Mr. Hammerin observed, when the class got to Virgil, "that it was only in deference to the invariable rules o' the school, no' to push ae' pupil before another, that he did na' place him in the uppermost class, that was readin' Homer."

"But never mind, my man," continued he; "the best introduction to Greek is a good foundation o' Latin; an' ye're layin' that wi' as good success as ony scholar I ever had."

Two things struck Solomon, who began about this time to use his reason, as not very philosophical in Mr. Hammerin's speech. "First," said the pupil, (but it was only to himself,) "why should I be kept back if I'm able to go on?" and secondly, "why should



I be told that Latin is the best introduction to Greek, when Greek is the more primitive language of the two?"

The truth is, that Solomon had been making some encroachments both upon Homer and Herodotus, in spite of his being kept back from the Homeric class; and he could not but see that Virgil was rather a close copy of Homer. Neither could he exactly understand why he should be made to study the copy before he studied the original. That was not, he thought, a sound view of the case.

As Solomon was making the progress in learning indicated by what precedes, great changes took place in the family.

Mr. Seesaw died; and so great was the affliction of Mrs. Seesaw, on losing the man whom she had kept a martyr ever since the connubial knot was tied, that she declared she could no longer live in Crabtree Cottage; that all the walks, and groves, and brooks about Dullborough were very lugubrious; that the air was not healthy, nor were the people to be

associated with; and that though it was a pity, to be sure, to interrupt the progress of her son Solomon's education, and of her daughters' dancing and other fashionable acquirements, yet that there were perhaps in other places as good teachers as Mr. Hammerin, and as good governesses of schools as Miss Tiptop, the decayed milliner. "But even if it were not so," she observed, "I can no longer live alone amid scenes which I have hitherto enjoyed with my dear departed husband; God rest and bless his soul!"

A few bitter, sincere, and therefore respected reminiscences, (no matter how destined to speedy oblivion,) assuredly arose upon the widow's conscience.

Death, by laying pale, and in their winding-sheets, even violent enemies, such as sometimes, alas! are man and wife, conveys often a solemn admonition, accompanied by remorse, to the survivor. He reasons, perhaps, thus:—"How little is it the part, and how much less can it be the prerogative, of one human being

to embitter in this valley,—naturally one of tears,—the existence of another?

“No doubt the unavailing sorrow of the surviving party is augmented by the conviction that contrition as regards the husband gone, or friend departed, is of no avail: tears and sobbings and acknowledgment of past injury, offered up over the corpse, cannot recall consciousness to him who is in his coffin, nor awaken the sympathy of him who is mouldering in the dust.

“How many people have been at variance with each other, all their lives, who would give, on the first outbreak of affliction for a sudden bereavement, life, fortune, everything, which could restore the deceased to one five minutes’ conversation!”

Solomon’s father thus departed, and, for a week, somewhat in this tone, Mrs. Seesaw bewailed her loss. But time has a wonderful effect in obliterating such lamentation; and after going into widow’s weeds,—after weeping for one Sunday at the kirk, and absorbing her tears by the porous qualities of a lily-white

handkerchief, sufficiently moistened with lavender, Mrs. Seesaw yielded herself up, with pious resignation, and some hope that she might not long require the aid of it, to the unwilling conclusion, that she was indeed a "lone and widow-woman."

I do not know that this would much have distressed her; but then she was neither a "rich widow," nor a "buxom widow," a "young widow," nor a "widow without incumbrance."

She had eight children. The cares of life, she confessed, had brought wrinkles under her eyes before the time; and she was in some doubt whether it would not be prudent to substitute for her coming (indeed, already come) grey hairs, an auburn wig, with graceful curls, that might draw attention from the obtruding symptoms of what she called premature old age. The word "old," even though only whispered to herself *by* herself, and, after a look into the glass, not half-believed as applicable to her, sounded gratingly on her ears.

None of us like to be told that we have got into the vale of years, though the fact implies that we are drawing near to "another and a better world."

We all seem *practically* to think this present world the best in which we can live, while yet theoretically we are for ever pointing to that higher hemisphere in which, as immortal beings, we assert that we are to pass an eternity of joy.

How strange that we should be so reluctant to go in, and take possession of it!

We may understand (though it is not easy) how the marquis should be sorry for the death of his father, the duke; but to believe that the marquis is sorry to become a duke, demands an acquiescence which few will be ready to yield.

The secret of the matter seems to be, that the marquis *knows* he must become a duke, and, knowing also how good a thing a dukedom is, he longs to come to the estate.

The aspirant after a higher estate, on the



other hand, whatever he may assert as to his being heir to a better dukedom in a better world, at best *hopes* it may be so. He has no *certainty*, but often many doubts and misgivings on the subject. *He does not feel that he is positively heir-apparent.*

All arrangements were speedily made for the departure of the now widowed Mrs. Seesaw and her family from Crabtree Cottage, in the vicinity of Dullborough town.

Mr. Hammerin called to take a kind farewell of his pupils.

I say pupils ; for, beside Solomon, there were three younger brothers initiated by the Dominie into the first principles of English and Latin grammar, writing and arithmetic. They were the first principles, and the last they ever had at a public school ; for, Mrs. Seesaw's patrimony being all on which she now had to depend, and her idea of Solomon being, that he was as clever as Mr. Hammerin himself, she said that he must act as tutor to his younger brothers and

sisters, and reminded him of the expense at which she had been for his education.

It was while she was descanting on this topic, that Mr. Hammerin opportunely walked in.

His constitutional cough was upon him ; his bent-down body showed that he was tending to mother earth ; his measured gait betrayed at once his mechanical habits, and his habitual cast of thought,—all study and contemplation. His heavy footstep spoke ominous things. It fell upon the ground as if it were calling upon the grave to prepare for a new occupant, while his countenance, pinched into an expression of habitual severity, as being the signal ever required to keep in awe his unruly flock, at once of duxes and of dunces, could have afforded not a trait to Lavater of philanthropic expression.

Yet Mr. Hammerin was by no means a cynic. What he was, he was made by *habit*. This is a powerful modeller of character, but it is not always powerful enough to obliterate that innate humanity, which often lies hidden

under a rough exterior; nor to dry up that current of the milk of human kindness, which is sometimes ruffled on the surface, by the passing storm and turbulence of everyday life.

“Gude mornin’,” said Mr. Hammerin to Mrs. Seesaw.

“Gude mornin’, an’ weel be wi’ you,” replied the lady.

“I’m really wae,” rejoined the Dominie, “that ye’re gawin’ to leave us; for in twa’ three months mair, it’s certain that Solomon wud hae been in the Greek class; an’ after that, he might hae gane to the Edinburgh University when ye liket. He has nae a bad head for mathematics: he got ow’r the pons asinorum wonderfully; an’ he kens, may be, as muckle about “ $a$  plus  $b$ ” as ony scholar in the school.”

The first part of this short harangue was to Mrs. Seesaw intelligible, and she was proud of it. The latter part was Greek; but she readily construed it into a proof that her son

must be really "a clever chiel," to be spoken about in such learned terms.

"Weel," said she, "Mr. Hammerin, ye may understand what a mother's feelin's maun be, on hearin' sic a report o' her son; and especially (she continued) frae sic an a man as yoursel'.

"The poor deceased was ay tellin' me about the ancients; but I as constantly asked him, whar's the ancient school-maister to be compared wi' the modern Mr. Hammerin?"

Mr. Hammerin bowed; that is to say, he stooped a few inches lower than usual: for his body was bent into a perpetual bow.

"Ye need na' be sae modest," said Mrs. Seesaw. "Every body kens, though they canna' penetrate, the extent o' your abeelity an' learnin'."

"Mrs. Seesaw," said Mr. Hammerin, "leavin' this ow'r-engagin' topic, let me ask if there's ony thing I can do to serve ye before ye leave our town an' neebourhood?"

“Yes, a good deal,” replied the widow.—

“What is’t?” said the Dominie.

“You see, Mr. Hammerin,” replied she, “that I’m a poor widow-woman—I canna’ afford, as heretofore, to keep my bairns at the school. Do ye think Solomon’s capable o’ bein’ their teacher; an’ if ye do, what method wud ye prescribe?”

Mr. Hammerin answered these two questions at once, and thus—

“As for Solomon’s capabeelity o’ teachin’ a young class like yours, there’s nae doubt about that. Indeed, if he had staid wi’ me three years langer, he should hae had Mr. Greenhorn’s place, an’ a salary o’ twenty pounds a year. Ye may guess frae this candid declaration, how capable I think him o’ conductin’ the education o’ your young family.

“As to the second point o’ your enquiry, let him just follow the method he’s seen at Dullborough school, an’ he canna’ gang wrang. Gie him a pair o’ tawse; gie him ample authority; let him hae a stool higher than ony



that his brithers an' sisters sit on ; tak' wi' ye half a dizin o' my sklates, sklate-pencils, rulers, copy-books, indy-rubber, readin'-lessons, rudiments, spellin'-books, arithmetical lessons for young beginners, questions an' answers on the New Testament, and twa or three books o' a higher order to keep up an' increase his ain knowledge ; an' ye'll see that he'll not only save ye the expense o' a tutor, but grow himsel' a clever an' cleverer fallow every day. O' a' the things, Mrs. Seesaw, for strengthenin' a man's intellect, an' tryin' his patience, there's nane like that o' teachin'. I should nae wonder, though he's leavin' me now, if at the end o' the three years, I still took him to be my helper ; an' as I tell ye, on a salary o' twenty pounds a year.

“ But while he's instructin' his pupils, O ! Mrs. Seesaw, let him no' forget to enlighten himsel'.”

Mrs. Seesaw expressed herself not only delighted with what Mr. Hammerin said, but

frankly acknowledged that she owed the happy prospect opened up to her, as regarded the education of her family, entirely to his wisdom, learnin', patience and kindness.

A bottle of wine was drawn; a farl (or cake) of shortbread was broken; Solomon and the other children were called into the room; the widow endeavoured to look sad at the prospect of leaving the Dominie, the Dominie at parting from her and her family. The family, alas! Solomon not excepted (such is human nature), felt particularly glad at the prospect of leaving Mr. Hammerin; and the tall, athletic, and one-eyed female servant, who had brought in the wine, stood eyeing with marvellous astonishment the parting scene.

The glasses were scarcely filled, when in came Mr. Deavehim the clergyman, presently followed by Mr. Lightfoot the dancing-master, by Miss Tiptop the decayed milliner, and by Mr. Wagginwatty the teacher of writing and arithmetic. The blind fiddler groped his way





The parlour at White's



to Crabtree Cottage, and requested that, for the last time, he might be allowed to play a new tune to the two Miss Seesaws, as they danced "shantrews." He suggested that this might do away with the melancholy which, though he did not see, he was sure must be prevailing, in consequence of the departure of his friends.

The suggestion was heartily welcomed by all.

Up got the ladies and danced shantrews. Then up got Solomon and danced a hornpipe. Then an eightsome reel was arranged, of which the minister, in deference to his cloth, was only a spectator. But he could well be spared; for the schoolmaster, the helper, Mrs. Seesaw, her two oldest daughters, two sons, and Mr. Wagginwatty, all under the scientific direction of the dancing-master, made up the party.

So that a meeting which, as the last among loving friends, portended only sighs and re-



grets, ended, as it were much to be desired all meetings should do, in hilarity and joy.

The Dominic added his parting nod; the minister gave his parting admonition; Mr. Wagginwatty redoubled the shake of his head; the dancing-master showed Mrs. Seesaw the last new cut; Robin, the fiddler, played "Erin go bragh;" and Mr. Greenhorn stood gaping in amazement.

Three huge waggons being loaded with Mrs. Seesaw's furniture, the inmates of Crabtree Cottage (including two servants) bade adieu to Dullborough.

They proceeded by water to Liverpool, and thence by land to Llangollen in Wales, where, as a cheap, retired, and romantic place, Mrs. Seesaw determined to pass, if not in sober sadness, at least in sober propriety, the first year of her widowhood. Economy, too, being an object with Mrs. Seesaw, she chose Llangollen on this account; and she made herself quite easy on the score of education,

seeing that Solomon now stood before her as the image of Mr. Hammerin, and was, by this gentleman's own declaration, as competent as himself to educate her growing family.

Another cottage was taken, called Vale Cottage, although it was in no vale, but on a precipitous cliff that overlooks the sweeping flood which beautifies the valley of Llangollen.

## CHAPTER VI.

In which some remarks in general are made upon the Dialects and Languages of Great Britain and Ireland, and by Mrs. Seesaw, in particular, upon the Welsh, and their Language. —Preparations for a family school.

It is worthy of remark that there is no civilized country in Europe in which, not only so many different dialects prevail, but so many different languages, as in Great Britain.

Yorkshire has its peculiar dialect, Lancashire, Northumberland, Cumberland, theirs. The peasant of Worcestershire understands not him of Westmoreland; and still less can he of the latter county hold any intelligible communication with the cockney.

In the vicinity of Cambridge, if you talk

good English to a labouring man, or small farmer, they touch their hats, beg your pardon, and passing on, in evident reluctance to continue the conversation, avow themselves to be "no scholars."

In Scotland the dialects, and especially the *twangs*, are as various as in England. Your native of Aberdeen understands not him of Glasgow; and your Paisley "Buddy," learned in politics, and cunning at the loom, gapes, stares, and looks unutterable astonishment, when he is addressed by a man of Tweeddale.

The Irish are more uniform in their dialect when they *do* speak English; the thing chiefly remarkable in them being the accent.

All this is anomalous; but not so much so as the fact that we have in the two Islands, denominated Great Britain and Ireland, five distinct languages, cut up into so many dialects, that it would be endless to enumerate them. There is the English language, properly so called; the Scotch language;—and

there are the Gaelic, the Welsh, and the Irish languages.

How all this difference has arisen, we can tell by reference to the records of national and provincial history ; but how it should continue to exist in the Nineteenth Century, in a community proverbially enlightened and learned, that circulates hundreds of daily papers, and other publications, all in *one* language ; in a country thickly studded with schools, colleges, and richly endowed universities ;—to show how *this* happens were a problem worthy of solution.

It is to be feared that after all our boasting about national education, neither the “school-master,” nor the “Penny Magazine” are sufficiently abroad.

Among the lower classes, to whom the preceding observations chiefly apply, those two great instruments of instruction are certainly *not* in efficient operation ; and as regards the higher classes, it might be a good deal to



their advantage if they had a little more frequent reference to both the master and the Magazine.

The first *desagrément* of which Mrs. Seesaw had to complain, on occasion of her establishment at Llangollen, was, that she could not understand either the native language, or the dreadfully mangled English dialect of the Welsh inhabitants.

“It’s no’ like Scotland, this place,” said she; “the folks are a’ barbarians: they canna’ speak their ain langidge.”

“Mother,” replied Solomon, “maybe if a Welchman gaed to Dullborough, he wud mak’ the same observation.”

Mrs. Seesaw was rather struck.

“Weel, Solomon, my man,” replied she, “ye’re maybe right; but do ye no’ see how greedy they are o’ leeks and ingins!”

“An’ do they no like taties, an’ parritch, an’ sour milk in Scotland?” answered her firstborn.

“Weel, maybe ye’re right there again,” replied Mrs. Seesaw.

There was a quiet, yet invincible sturdiness, about Solomon’s manner, that, associated with Mrs. Seesaw’s early recollections of her little controul over him, made him a much more effectual governor of his mother than ever Mr. Seesaw had been of his wife.

On the present occasion, our hero developed, for the first time, his powers of generalisation in the following harangue:—

“Ye see, mother, it’ll no’ do to measure the character an’ prejudices o’ ither folk by our ain. We’ve a’ our tantrums an’ peculiarities. You have yours: I ken that I have mine. The Scotch have theirs (rather odd some o’ them, too), an’ the Welsh, nae doubt, have theirs. This seems to me a queer sort o’ town, nae doubt; but we maun never forget Dullborough. It’s just as odd a ane.

“I canna’ speak English ony mair than the

folk here ; an' though I can write it, ye ken that's awin' to my schoolin' ; an' maybe a Welsh educated young man wud be able to pit pen to paper wi' mysel'.

“Noo ye ken't before ye cam' here, that you were nae comin' to a Scotch town ; an' as ye've ta'en the step, it seems to me unreasonable to fa' out, a' at ance, wi' the poor Welsh buddies, because they canna' understan' you, nor you them.

“Ye want economy,—here ye've got it ; ye want quiet an' retirement,—here ye've gotten them ;—ye want caller air,—here it is ;—ye're at nae loss for education, for I (as I may say) am the tutor o' the family.

“What mair wud ye be at ?

“Society, to be sure, ye canna ha'e because that ye canna afford ; but wud ye be able to afford it better at Dullborough ?

“No' half sae weel, because there ye were ken't as a woman o' some substance, as lang as Mr. Seesaw was livin'. Ye moved, therefore, in

a certain circle, an' at a necessary expense. Your pride wudna' ha'e been pleased to let yoursel' doun in that circle; an' the only alternative wud hae been to rin into debt.

"Noo think o' duns frae the cloth-merchant, the tailor, the grocer, the shoemaker, the school-maister, the hatter, the wine-merchant, the upholsterer, an' aboon a', the landlord;—an' just consider whether it's no' better to sink doun a little at ance, whar naebody kens ony thing about ye, than either to do't whar *every* body kens ye, an' to hae a' the duns I've been speakin' about knockin' at your door, day an' night, an' your bein' obliged to tell a' the lies ye *maun* tell, to avoid them, by sayin' ye're no' at hame, when ye're only hidin' yoursel' in a back room?

"Even this state o' things might last for some time; but as sure as the sun's in heaven, your house wud be roupit at last, an' ye wud hae every neebor in the place pointin' their finger at ye, an' sayin', in their ain

sleeve, 'There goes the proud Mrs. Seesaw. It wud be tellin' her if she was as honest as she is proud.' "

Solomon was left master of the field, and from this time he became not the adviser merely, but the ruler of the family.

"Mother," he said, "education is the basis o' wisdom, wisdom is the handmaid o' understandin'; an' we ken, frae high authority, that 'by understandin' God made the heavens.' "

"Nae doubt," said Mrs. Seesaw; "I'm glad to hear ye quotin' your Bible."

"Weel, then," replied Solomon, who, when he had got an admission of his general principles, pounced immediately upon particulars, "let us set up the family school."

"Wi' a' my heart," rejoined his mother; "do yer ain way."

"Procrastination," thought Solomon, "is truly the thief of time;" and so, whatever his hand found to do, he did it with his might. It would be good for most people if they did the same.



That very night, after his brothers and sisters had gone to bed, Solomon took up to the large attic which overtopped the first floor of the small house which Mrs. Seesaw rented in Llangollen, the sundry appendages of a school. He collected all the books and slates, and pens and pencils in the house; he arranged them on a small book-shelf, which he affixed to the wall. He then brought from the kitchen three stools, and took out of the bedrooms five chairs; he filled two ink-bottles, one with black ink, and the other with red; he ruled half-a-dozen copy-books, and headed them with sundry sage axioms, such as,—

*Hasty reflections seldom speed well.*

*Hope is grief's best music.*

*He who wants content cannot find an easy chair.*

These were all written in his own best hand.

He then, with some difficulty, brought up a deal table from the kitchen, and covered it with a piece of baize; he placed upon it the school

apparatus, and then set about constructing, at the head of the table, his own desk of authority.

This he did, by tightly lacing one chair on the top of another. He placed, for a foot-board, a "cutty-stool," so located as to admit of his resting his feet upon it while in a sitting position, and of his standing on it, towering above his scholars, when he wished to enforce his authority by commanding silence.

In lieu of a desk, he erected in front of his seat a pair of what are called "steps,"—a machine that enables the housemaid to reach the upper part of a room,—and over these "steps" he threw another piece of baize.

In anticipation of the task in which he was to be engaged, he had procured, in the morning, a piece of thick, but pliant and well-dressed leather, and he laid it upon his desk, in its circular form, capable of development, when in authoritative exercise, to the length of three feet.

He then strewed the floor with yellow sand, mended half-a-dozen pens, and rehearsed from his bench to the hitherto unoccupied chairs, the speech with which he was to open the school.

As insignia of his superior knowledge to that of his pupils, he laid upon the "steps," at his left hand, his Dullborough Virgil, and his private Homer.

He then walked round and round the attic, with the nearly exhausted candle in his hand.

He came to the conclusion that, though his school was inferior in size to that of Dullborough, it was got up in not a less business-like style. Solomon then went to rest.

*Solomon*  
*then went to rest*

## CHAPTER VII.

Solomon initiates his peculiar system of Method and Education, and like most great Reformers, meets with many obstacles—This obliges him to resort to severe measures, which, being followed by an amnesty, are productive of the best results.

SOLOMON'S preparations kept him up much beyond the time of his usually going to rest. But scarcely had the slanting rays of the sun tinged the tops of the Langollen Hills, when up he started from his couch, called the lazy servants from theirs, told them he must have breakfast at seven o'clock, and referred them to Mrs. Seesaw for a confirmation of his orders.

The servants had never before been disturbed by Solomon,—for he was of lazy habits, unless when they were counteracted by some

strong motive to exertion ; and then his impetuosity and bustle were as remarkable as had been his disinclination to exertion.

It was by such motive that he was roused to study, from having been given up to play and relaxation ; it was by such a motive that he was now actuated in establishing his school ; and it was to the extraordinary contrast between, sometimes, days of idleness, and at other times of irresistible industry and uncontrollable motion, that Solomon owed, if not the reputation, as the servant had, on a former occasion, expressed it, of being "crackit," at least that of being a very odd and unintelligible sort of boy.

In the present instance both servants got up ; and one of them going down to Mrs. Seesaw, with an exaggerated, and not very good-natured account of Solomon's intrusion, at so unreasonable an hour, asked if the children were henceforth to breakfast at seven o'clock ?



"By a' means," said Mrs. Seesaw, "if Solomon orders it."

Her deference to Solomon was at wonderful variance with her rebellion against the late Mr. Seesaw ; who, far from being able to command, in a single instance, her acquiescence, could scarcely ever command a moment's peace. Breakfast being ordered, Solomon's next care was to revisit the school, open the window-shutters, and seeing there was no bell-pull in the garret, to break off one of the bells pendent in the lower regions from the wire that conducted to the drawing-room.

He anticipated some difficulty in being able to raise his brothers and sisters from their dead slumbers at so unusual an hour, and half past six o'clock he marched into the two rooms which contained them, with his bell in one hand and his "tawse" in the other.

Ringin' the bell, "Get up," he said ; "we're gawin' to hae schoolin' at half-past seven o'clock an' breakfast at seeven."

Strong manifestations of rebellion were apparent.

The brother next to him in age said—

“Aye, man, and wha are you to order us in this way?”

Solomon knowing him to be a reasonable youth, argued the case with him, and prevailed, not only to the extent of his getting up, but to his yielding to become assistant tutor of the school.

The second brother (Archy) was a little more sturdy, and absolutely refused obedience.

He had always liked his pillow more than his book; and with a vast fund of natural wit, sprightliness and stubbornness, was decidedly, as far as learning goes, the dunce of the family.

Solomon was not a man of half measures. He not only knew his brother's lazy habits, but feared he would become a focus of revolt and idleness.

Finding remonstrance vain, the young

Dominie, without further ceremony, uncurled his long ferula, and gave the rebel over a nameless part three such intelligible intimations of his lately acquired authority, and absolute power, that the sufferer not only rose upright in his bed with a scream, but jumping out of it, grappled, in fura onset, with his elder brother.

Solomon threw down the bell and the "tawse," and grappled with him. Nor was the contest long dubious. He lifted up the caitiff from the floor, back to the bed from which he had come, and there ministered to him such a dose of ferula, as made him cry "pecavi," and dress in a prodigious hurry. He ran down stairs, as if going to breakfast, but made a sudden turn into his mother's room, and with sobs and tears, entered a loud, solemn, and bitter protest against Solomon's conduct.

"Gang awa,' my man," said Mrs. Seesaw to Archy, "and tell Solomon to speak to me."

Archy returned with the triumphant message.

"I winna gang," replied Solomon, as, without intermission, he kept rousing one after another of his brothers and sisters from their slumbers.

Down went Archy and reported.

Up rose Mrs. Seesaw, alarmed at the noise and bustle which she heard overhead.

In a great hurry she put on her morning wrapper, stockings and slippers, and followed by Archy, entered the room in which Solomon, surrounded by now five dressed members of the family, was urging the other two to complete their attire.

"What, in the name o' gudeness are ye' about, Solomon?" said Mrs. Seesaw.

"Gettin' up my scholars," replied Solomon.

"Weel, but, my man," (a favourite expression of Mrs. Seesaw's,) "you're no' to do't in this rough sort o' way; ye'll succeed far better by gentle means."

“Will I?” said Solomon, and turning round to his mother with more earnestness and solemnity than he had ever put on, addressed her thus:—

“Ye’ll allow, I suppose, mother, that the first duty o’ a teacher is to get the upper hand o’ his scholars; do you admit that?”

“Naebody can deny that,” said Mrs. Seesaw.

“Was it by gentle means that you got the upper han’ o’ my father?” inquired Solomon, with a more sarcastic tone than his mother had yet observed in him.

“That’s no’ a question for you to pit,” retorted his mother, half stricken by her conscience, and somewhat between fear and dislike of her son.

“But it *is* a question for me to pit,” answered Solomon, “an’ since *you’ll* no answer’t, I will. It was by *nae* gentle means, but by constant feghtin’ an’ quarrelin’ that ye got the upper han’.”



"Oh! my man," replied the mother, "if ye wud only imitate the meekness an' gentleness o' your brither Tammy, ye might do a' the gude, without the uproar an' heart-burnin' that ye sometimes mak'."

Solomon saw that now or never was the time to establish his authority, at once with his mother and his pupils.

They were all, except Tammy, gathering round her, and making common cause against the odious innovations, as they conceived them, which Solomon was attempting to introduce into their infant community.

"Noo, mother," said the uncompromising Dominie, "ye gied me authority, last night, to form a school, an' tell't me to do't in my ain way.

"Did ye no'?"

With no small reluctance, his mother confessed that she did.

"How is't that *noo* then, at the very beginnin' o' my business, ye're invadin' my authority, an' increasin' a spirit o' rebellion

already too apparent in every ane o' your children?

“Look, here's the ‘tawse,’ if I'm no' to use them as I like; here's the bell, if I'm no' to ring it when I please; up stairs is the school-room, a' fitted out; an' if *I'm* no' to be maister there,—if you ever again come in, interferin', or intermeddlin', let *Tammy* be the maister, an' I'll set about some ither business for mysel'.

“Besides, I *maun* ha'e breakfast an' dinner at regular hours.

I'll no submit to't, that ony o' my scholars should be a minute ahint the time, an' that 'll be declared by the bell.” So saying, Solomon threw up the insignia of office (his bell and tawse), and was quietly walking out of the room, when not Mrs. Seesaw only, but his brothers and sisters, seeing him more in earnest than they had ever seen him before, all, with the exception of the rebel Archy, begged of him “to be school maister on his ain terms.”

“ Very weel,” said Solomon; and taking at once up his bell, he gave a ring with it, as loud as that of the bell-man of Margate.

The two servants made their appearance.

The hubbub had occupied so long a time, that it was within a few minutes of seven o'clock.

“ Is breakfast ready ?” asked Solomon.

The cook looked at Mrs. Seesaw.

“ Is breakfast ready ?” reiterated the young dominie, with a stamp of his foot.

“ What are we to do, mem ?” appealed the cook, curtseying to Mrs. Seesaw.

“ Gang awa', Jenny,” answered Mrs. Seesaw, “ an' get the breakfast as soon's ever ye can.”

“ Are we to obey Maister Solomon, noo, mem ?” asked Jenny.

“ By a' means,” replied Mrs. Seesaw.

Jenny was running off to get breakfast, in the belief that the heads of the whole family were turned, when Solomon quietly interposed

between her and the door, and said, "Stop a minute."

Jenny once more curtseyed, and stopped.

Then spoke Solomon to the whole audience, but addressed himself particularly to the servants, thus :—

"I wish ye a' to hear, frae my mother's ain lips, that she has appointed me maister o' the school, in this house.

"Mother—is't true or no'?"

"Certainly," answered Mrs. Seesaw.

"Weel, speakin' first to you, Jenny an' Lizzy, I have to tell you that this appointment's no' settin' me up as your maister, instead o' my mother. She's your lawfu' mistress : an' if to her ye dinna yiel' obedience an' respect, ye'll see how shune I'll find it out.

"In twa' things, an' twa' only, is my voice to be superior to hers. I *insist* upon haein' breakfast at seeven o'clock, an' dinner at twa. If ye dinna' mind thae twa precepts o' mine (here he struck the 'tawse' with great

pith upon the table) ye'll may-be find," said Solomon, with terrible emphasis," that I've mair than a'e argument in favor o' regularity. Ye may gang down stairs."

Off marched Jenny, followed by her companion; while Solomon, whose speeches were more remarkable for point than length, thus addressed the juvenile part of the posse comitatus.

"Ye see, my frien's, ye had better do your duty, an' obey me."

"*I winna*," said the rebel.

Without noticing him, Solomon added, in a tone of great affection and respect, to his mother: "Weel, mother, noo that a's settled, I desire to say, before a' your bairns that there's no' ane o' them that can respect your authority, or feel mair gratefu' for your affection than mysel'; an' there's no' the thing in reason that ye can ask me to do that I wud na' gang to the warl's end to do to please ye.

"It's only the *school* I hae been speaking o'.



In a' ither respects, they're your bairns, no' mine: an' if ye want my assistance to keep them in order, here I am."

Scarcely had Solomon reached this point of his oration, when up came Lizzy, and with a curtsy said "That Jenny desired her respects to maister Solomon, an' the parritch was ready."

The squad of scholars were delighted with this announcement, and little accustomed to training or order, made a simultaneous rush to the door.

Solomon was beforehand with them, and shut it. "Stop," said he, "I must ring the bell first. I'll gi'e three rings ilka mornin' for breakfast; an' *before* that, there's no' ane o' ye that daur gang down stairs.

"An' when I *do* ring, I'll be at the head o' the stairs; then ye're a' to follow me, accordin' to your ages."

Tinkle-ing — tinkle-ing — tinkle-ing, went the bell; "An' noo," said the dominie, "follow me."

It generally happens that the most boisterous and unruly person in any society, in matters of discipline and duty, is the most forward to seize upon the loaves and fishes.

So it was in this case.

Archy the rebel took the lead of the whole family in his attempt to get to breakfast.

But Solomon coolly collared him as he was passing out of the room, and said to him : "Ye've threatened, my birkie, no' to obey me ; and until ye mak' a solemn promise that ye *will* obey me, ye'se hae neither breakfast, dinner, nor supper."

"I *winna*," said the rebel.

But he was afraid of further physically encountering the prowess of Solomon : and so he allowed himself, without resistance, to be held by this last, till the juvenile procession, composed of the other members of the family, had passed out of the room, being ordered by their master to halt at the head of the stairs till he should come out.

Then quietly loosing hold of his pupil

Archy, Solomon locked the door upon him; and, with his bell and tawse, in a state that would have done credit to Mr. Hammerin himself, marched at the head of his little band, to the parlour, to breakfast.

Never had it been so neatly laid out before.

Mrs. Seesaw looked on with astonishment, confessing that regularity, of which she knew nothing, was an excellent thing; while Lizzy, waiting with more than usual respect and attention, said in a whisper to Mrs. Seesaw: "Eh! mem, if the late Mr. Seesaw had been like maister Solomon, it wud hae been tellin' us a'."

"'Deed wud it, Lizzy," replied the widow; "an' be it said without ony reproach to them that's gane to their lang' hame, that although Solomon has mair power o'er me than ever my dead husband had, I like the laddie better than I did his father.

"There's something sterlin' an' sagacious about Solomon that ye can depend upon; and though he has a rough exterior, I'm

sure he hasna' a bad heart. Ye heard wi' what respect he concluded his boisterous speech about the school."

"Did I no', mem?" said Lizzy; "an' to tell ye the truth, Jenny an' me has baith since agreed, that though we *maun* get up a little sooner, the house will be conducted wi' far better regularity than it ever could ha'e been before, when there was nane.

"Nae doubt the young maisters an' misses is a' fine weans; but weel a' wat, they're no' a little unruly sometimes.

"I declare, Mrs. Seesaw, that we're sometimes obliged to wash the passage three times a day; an' as for the garden, there's nae-body ever can walk in't, nor is there ever a flower to be seen, nor a ripe cherry, currant, apple, gooseberry, or pear. They'll no' even let the turnips and carrots grow without stealin' them."

"I'm afeard its ower true," said Mrs. Seesaw, mournfully.

At this point of their conversation, they

were interrupted by a violent noise proceeding from the room of the rebellious prisoner. He was kicking at the door, and stamping on the floor of the place of his confinement.

Mrs. Solomon was alarmed; Lizzy nearly fainted; and both ran up to the door, of which Solomon, however, had deposited the key in his own pocket.

"What's the matter?" asked Mrs. Seesaw, plaintively.

"I'll hang mysel', if ye dinna' let me out an' gie me my breakfast," replied Archy.

Up they both ran to the school-room, where Solomon, although he had heard the noise as well as either of them, was sitting, and, with earnest austerity, inculcating his maxims, and opening up his system of education to his brothers and sisters.

"Solomon, Solomon," said his mother; "your brither's ga'in' to hang himsel'; for God's sake come down an' let him out!"



“Is he ready,” asked Solomon, “to mak’ an apology, an’ promise what I required o’ him?”

“Oh! never mind that the noo,” replied the anxious mother; come an’ let him out, an’ nae dou’t a’ ’ll be right.”

“*I will not,*” answered Solomon, “though he *should* hang himsel’; but ye need nae be the least afeard o’ that; he kens better. It’s no birkies like him that hang themselves; an’ the mair a man threatens to do’t the less I believe him.

“You have ratified my authority this day; you have broken your promise no’ to interfere; an’ ye’ll permit me, wi’ a’ respect, to shew ye the way out o’ the school-room.”

So saying, he walked Mrs. Seesaw respectfully out of the room; and closing the door and locking it, he said, “Tell Archy that whensoever he’s ready to fulfil his part o’ the bargain, I’ll complete mine.”

Mrs. Seesaw thought her first-born very hard-hearted, and she wept.

But knowing that he was not to be warped, she betook herself to the door of the prison, entreating its inmate to comply with the stipulated terms, and telling him how impossible it was, otherwise, to move his brother to compassion.

Archy's stomach began very much to yearn for his morning meal, now so considerably delayed; he looked at the handkerchief he had tied to the bed-post, in the hope that it might be seen by those whom he expected anxiously to rush in upon his solitude; and the love of parritch overcoming the desire for a gallows, he took down the instrument of death; and said, doggedly: "Weel, I'll do what Solomon likes."

His rejoiced mother ran up, and told Solomon this.

"Very weel," said Solomon; "gang you awa' down to the parlour, an' when I've heard my second class, I'll gang mysel', an' hear what Archy has to say."

His mother again thought this delay very hard ; but being pretty well convinced that remonstrance was of little avail, she walked down stairs, tapping gently, as she passed, at the prisoner's door, and whispering to him that Solomon would be down immediately. She cautioned Archy not to be boisterous or impatient.

The Dominie purposely protracted the examination of his second class ; " For," said he to himself, " I ken the birkie's subdued noo ; an' it'll no' do to spoil the thing by lettin' him think I'm in a hurry to mak' it up."

An occasional, but subdued stamp, and outcry announced how much the rebel grudged every minute that passed over his head.

Solomon did not regard it.

His mother did ; for, from the moment she reached the parlour, she left the door ajar, and with eager ear, and palpitating heart, stood listening to hear the conversation which she had no doubt would imme-

diately take place between the teacher and the pupil.

Solomon allowed a full half hour, however, to roll away before he visited the rebel; and then, even for the few minutes that he expected to be absent, he left the school in solemn charge of his assistant, with this little speech.

“ I maun tak’ the tawse, because I’m no’ sure but that I may want to use them; but here’s the bell; an’ if onything gangs wrang, just gie’t a tinkle, an’ ye’ll soon see me here, tawse an’ a’.”

Tammy, the usher, said,—“ Very weel.”

Arrived at the door of the prison, Solomon gave an imperious knock.

Mrs. Seesaw’s heart “loupit to her mouth,” as she afterwards expressed it; (for she was now listening more anxiously than ever) while the rebel, still in his sulks, said, “ Wha’s there?”

He knew as well who was outside, as

that himself was inside ; but he thought that Solomon's coming at all betokened symptoms of a desire for reconciliation.

In answer to his question of " Wha's there ?" Solomon answered, " Na', if ye dinna ken my knock, an' especially, if ye dinna ken my voice, I'll gang awa' up to the school again."

He waited scarcely a moment for a reply, and not receiving it, was once more tramping up-stairs.

" Solomon—Solomon," in a passionate burst of tears, cried Archy ; " wait—wait just a minute, an' I'll speak."

" Very weel," said Solomon, " what hiv' ye to say ?"

He had not, however, waited the full minute, when the now subdued rebel addressed him thus :

" I'm a' wrang, Solomon ; oh let me out, an' I'll no' do't again."

" Ye'll obey me ?" said Solomon.

" Yes."



“Ye’ll come to the school at regular hours?”

“Yes.”

“Ye’ll come down to breakfast at seven?”

“Yes.”

“Ye’ll no saw the seeds o’ rebellion among the scholars?”

“No—no.”

“Will ye ask your mother’s pardon?”

“I will, I will,” responded the tamed spirit; and without further query or delay, Solomon, now almost as much agitated as his prisoner, unlocked the door.

He took Archy in his arms and sobbed out these few words,—“I’m very sorry, Archy, for what has happened; but I could na’ help it. I houp we’re noo made frien’s for ever.”

Mrs. Seesaw (who for five minutes had with great difficulty restrained herself), ran up stairs with all a mother’s joy, and embraced her reconciled sons; the servants followed; down, in spite of Solomon’s direc-

tions, came the scholars, some weeping, some laughing, all rejoicing; and the rebel Archy, like the prodigal son, restored to the bosom of his family, partook, in apparent penitence, if not of the fatted calf, at least of the very best which the house could afford.

Here, for the present, we shall drop the curtain.

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## CHAPTER VIII.

Solomon's School is organized—the reader is introduced to Mr. Holdfast; to the Widow Wynne and to her Daughter.

THERE is nothing like laying a good foundation; and so well, even in so short a time, did Solomon lay his, that his school prospered to admiration.

There was no fiddler for the dancing-school hours in Langollen; but there was an old and venerable Welsh harper, with whom Solomon agreed, on very moderate terms, for an attendance of two hours in the day.

What with his playing, and Solomon's performance, the dancing proceeded, and the music too: for the harper understood, and

could teach the piano, as well as the harp. Besides :

Tammy had a decided taste for the flute, and Mag, the eldest sister, for music in general.

So that the first principles of grammar, writing, arithmetic, Latin, algebra, geometry, music and dancing were all successfully taught in the attic.

For twelve months did Solomon cheerfully and unflinchingly pursue his avocation of dominie, assisted by his tutor Tammy.

At the end of this time,—indeed a good while before it,—he began to think of the necessity of his starting in the world, on his own account ; and he came the more readily to this resolution, as he found his assistant becoming every day more able to conduct the school.

He was precipitated, however, to a realization of his plans, by an incident, which, by wounding his pride, set him all on fire,

and determined him to the immediate execution of that of which he had heretofore only been *thinking*, viz., of making a stand in the world for himself.

A friend of the family happened to pass through Langollen, and of course called at Vale Cottage.

He had a great esteem for Solomon, but was one of those men ever more ready to give sage advice, than to minister essential relief. He would help and assist in any way,—and that very fervently,—so that he was never asked to draw his purse-strings in aid of his friends.

His name was Mr. Holdfast.

Having seen and admired the organization of Solomon's school, and having heard from Mrs. Seesaw, of the young dominie's desire to make a start in the world, Mr. Holdfast kindly said to the widow: "I think I could procure for him a situation as apprentice, in the shop of a very respectable friend of mine, a linen-draper."



Mrs. Seesaw did not much relish the anticipation of her son's handling a yard, and standing behind a counter.

She did not however wish to lose any feasible opening for him; and so thanked Mr. Holdfast for his offer.

"But," added she, "Solomon has his ain ways, an' I wish you would speak to him yoursel'."

"With all my heart," said Mr. Holdfast.

Solomon was summoned from the attic, with Mr. Holdfast's compliments.

The proposition was laid before him; and considering that he was only sixteen years of age, and that sixty pounds a year was pronounced as being the probable salary after the expiration of his apprenticeship, no doubt was entertained by Mr. Holdfast of his gladly and gratefully accepting the offer.

Solomon entered with a bow, and sat himself gravely down.

Mr. Holdfast said that he had something important, and, as he hoped, agreeable, to propose.

“What is’t, Sir?” asked Solomon, half serious, half glad.

The proposal was stated to him.

His anxious mother endeavoured to trace through the expression of his countenance, the workings of his mind.

The young dominie considered, but not for more than a minute; and then rising, he addressed Mr. Holdfast thus:

“Ye’re nae doubt an excellent frien’ o’ the family, Mr. Holdfast; an’ I canna’ but thank ye for your kindness to me.

“But ye may believe that I was never born into this worl’ to be a linen draper’s apprentice; an’ if ye were to try an’ consecrate me to that office at a salary o’ six hundred, instead o’ sixty pounds a-year, poor as I am, an’ poor as my prospects are, *I wudna’ tak’ it.*”

Without saying another word, Solomon marched back to his school; and in two minutes more, he was asking his usher Tammy “Whar’ they had left aff?”

Mr. Holdfast had most remarkable eyes.

They were neither straight-forward looking eyes, nor squinting eyes. They were neither black, nor blue, nor hazel, nor grey. They were of a dun hue, floating in a very superfluous quantity of moisture, which looked as if it had been produced by the steeping of tobacco in water. They never could bear the glance of another eye, especially if it was a keen one. When accosted, therefore, Mr. Holdfast either ogled, or looked on the ground.

When in a contemplative mood, occasioned by any sudden surprise, his eyes rolled round and round. A compound of vacuity, confusion and restlessness obliterated their natural character; and the uppermost instinct in the beholder was, to get out of the way.

This latter was the form which Mr. Holdfast's eyes assumed, on hearing the speech and beholding the conduct of Solomon.

It often happens that when you see a person thus not knowing how to look, or where to

turn himself, a similar epidemic is begotten in the beholder. I have suffered more from people's not being able to look me in the face, or from their doing so only with a disturbed than eye, from all the other grievances (multifarious as they are) of society.

Thus now looked Mr. Holdfast, and thus now felt Mrs. Seesaw.

The interview was too painful to both parties to be long protracted.

"Good morning," said Mr. Holdfast, awkwardly and hurriedly shaking Mrs. Seesaw's hand: "I am sorry that my efforts to serve your family have been unavailing."

"Gude mornin'," replied Mrs. Seesaw: "so am I."

"But stop, Mr. Holdfast," continued she, "I'm rather out o' siller: I dinna get my quarter's annuity (that was what Mrs. Seesaw called her quarterly dividend) for three weeks yet; an' maybe ye'll len' me ten pound till then. I'll repay ye wi' mony thanks."

“ Good morning, good morning,” reiterated Mr. Holdfast ; and, with his eyes more bewildered than ever, he took his departure.

But he deposited no ten pound note in the half outstretched hand of Mrs. Seesaw.

No sooner did Solomon hear the bell ring for Mr. Holdfast's departure, than he came down stairs, and thus addressed Mrs. Seesaw.

“ Mother : Mr. Hammerin ance affronted me ; an' it turned out a' for the better.

“ Mr. Holdfast has noo *deeply* affronted me ; an' I houp that'll turn out for the better, too.

“ In eight days I'm ga'in' to leave Tammy maister o' the school, an' to seek my ain fortune. Tammy's as clever as I am ; he is, as you say, a great deal better tempered, an' he kens how to manage the tawse wi' a' the effect, an' less o' the severity, o' your son Solomon.”

Mrs. Seesaw swooned.

Solomon, having often before seen her in that plight, burnt a feather, brought the



lavender-bottle, dipped a cloth in cold water, and bathed her temples. Presently, after one or two heaves, his mother was quite well.

Many were the pros adduced by Solomon in favour of his project of emigration ; and many the contras urged by his mother against it.

The son thought it not only necessary, but man-like ; the mother not only *unnecessary*, but rash in the extreme.

Tenacious Solomon, however, stuck to his purpose ; and busy preparations were made for his outfit and departure.

An episode must intervene, before he is launched into that sea of troubles, “ the world ; ” and though it has already been seen that he has had his ups and downs, even in the school, and family circle, it will be much more fully shown, after he starts upon what may be strictly termed “ his life and adventures,” how he was *up* to-day, *down* to-morrow ; and how, from dining with the Prince, he was sometimes fain to associate with very different

company. He will be seen now lolling in his carriage, and anon living in an attic; one day drinking his claret and champagne, and relishing his glass of ale another; sometimes courted by all the world, at others despised by it all, and especially by those who owed him most.

It has already been seen that Solomon was rather a severe lad, but by no means a cold-hearted one. He was careless, and that often brought him into trouble; sometimes too assiduous, and that often brought him into more. He was passionate, a terrible failing; and he was proud, a much greater one.

When I speak of pride as a failing, I speak of it as a failing in a poor man.—In a rich one it is a recognised virtue.

What *is* pride?—The assumption of superiority. Who are those most courted in the world?—Those who do assume, and especially those who can *maintain* this superiority.

Pride can be,—and often is,—in no country in the world so much as in this,—glossed over

with an almost enchanting urbanity of manner; but inquire, after all, what is going on in the inner man: it is consciousness, or a belief, of superiority,—which is pride.

• Inquire what is going on in the inner man of him who counts it an honour to be known to the proud man; and it is not only pride, too, but pride arrayed in the garb of humility, paying deference to pride arrayed in the garb of undisguised superiority.

Before proceeding farther I must introduce the reader to an acquaintance which Solomon made in Llangollen; and which, simple in its origin, it will be found, in the sequel, had an important influence on his after career.

There was living in the village of Llangollen a Welsh and widow lady of the name of Wynne; and she, like Jephthah, judge of Israel, had—

“ . . . one fair daughter and no more,  
The which she loved passing well.”

The family of Mrs. Seesaw, of course, attracted

some notice in a small Welsh village; and, at last, it attracted the notice of the greatest personage *in* the village, Mrs. Wynne.

Being herself a woman of peculiar and strong character, she was naturally arrested by that of Solomon: insomuch that he became a great favourite, and a constant visitant at her house.

Mrs. Wynne was a woman of good sense and much penetration; but, with an excellent heart, she had the drawback of rather austere manners. She was distant, and, like most Welsh people, rather lofty. Her natural good sense, and really good nature, however, were in constant operation to counteract the *hauteur* which was the natural growth of her education and family distinction, rather than the spontaneous production of her heart. She condescended to visit Mrs. Seesaw, got thus acquainted with Solomon, and, from a certain congeniality of temperament, pounced upon him as her favourite.

As Solomon's departure from Llangollen



drew near, his visits to Mrs. Wynne (after school-hours) became more frequent.

I say to Mrs. Wynne, because decorum requires it; but the real truth of the matter is that, without almost knowing it himself, he was attracted by a magnetism, of which the hidden power lay, not so much in Mrs. Wynne, as in Miss *Eliza* Wynne.

She was "passing fair," and, therefore, Solomon was excusable. Besides, having no such frequent visitor as the young preceptor,—scarcely, indeed, any other,—Eliza got unconsciously so familiar, and grew so kind, as to be led one day to say to Solomon, "Well, now, Solomon, if I had a brother, you are just the sort of one I should like."

"Ay," said Solomon, with a sigh, much deeper than usual, "but I'm going away."

Eliza cried, and Solomon, turning away his head, cried too.

"Well, but Eliza," said he, "will you not forget me?"



"Never!" she replied; and they walked slowly round and round the garden, arm-in-arm.

They tried in vain, however, to dry their tears, till they saw Mrs. Wynne in a distant corner of the garden.

With something of the fear with which our primeval parents, under a feeling of conscious delinquency, beheld their sire in Eden, Solomon and Eliza "hid themselves;" and then, going to a little fount in one of the shrubberies, washed their red eyes, till each told the other "that they did not look as if they had been crying."

When they returned to tea, Eliza asked her mother if she would allow her to read to Solomon (as he was now going away) the MS. which she (Eliza) had often read with so much pleasure.

Eliza sincerely loved her mother, and everything connected with her.

"That is the MS. you mean, my dear,"

said Mrs. Wynne, "which contains the portion of my short history up to the period of our settling here, and my observations upon the two singular ladies who occupied the little Gothic cottage in Merionethshire?"

"Yes, mamma," replied Eliza.

"Oh! by all means," answered Mrs. Wynne; it is but fair that Solomon, who has seen so much of us here, should know how we happened to come here.

"Only remember that the MS. is headed 'Martha Meredith;' which Solomon does not perhaps yet know was my maiden name," continued Mrs. Wynne.

The tea apparatus was then, in seaman's phraseology, "cleared away;" the sashes were drawn; the fire was stirred, and the light of the lamp made brighter. Solomon was seated on the sofa, by the side of Mrs. Wynne, who had her arm familiarly upon his shoulder.

The beautiful face of Eliza, shaded by a profusion of auburn hair, naturally curled

looked like that of Hebe, as, bending over the MS., and immediately under the lamp, a halo overspread her countenance while she read her mother's story, of which the commencement will be found in the next chapter.

## CHAPTER IX.

## The Story of Martha Meredith.

My father was the venerable head of an ancient and primitive family in a remote county of Wales.

The education prescribed for his daughters was of a two-fold nature. One part of it was superintended by an excellent mother, and embraced the elements of English and French grammar, geography, history, drawing, music, dancing, needle-work (especially embroidery) in all its branches, and the general rules and regulations of domestic economy.

The other part was taught by my father. It consisted in the science and practice of gardening, and the healthful exercises of riding, hawking and archery.

We had a library containing some of the best French and English authors ; and were directed to take our manners from the *Spectator*, and our morals from the *Rambler*.

As the *best* means of obtaining a true knowledge of character, we were advised to be close observers of men and of their actions.

But to help *forward* this observation, as well as to give us a taste for good writing and the elements of criticism, we were taught to read and understand La Bruyère, La Fontaine, Boileau, Le Sage, and Molière. My father thought Madame Dacier might be added ; but my mother, a woman of great shrewdness and good sense, considered her too sublime and *recherchée* for us.

She said she was *much* too learned, in the technical sense of the phrase.—She begged my father to remember, that not only had he interdicted the study of Latin and Greek, but had very properly resolved that we should neither take our religion from the mythology of Homer,



nor vitiate our imagination with pagan fables, from the metamorphoses of Ovid.

Our brother, she said, might be properly allowed to read the Greek poet in the original. "He was training," she observed, "for the army; and she had understood there were many good descriptions of battles in Homer, a knowledge of which might be useful in a military career. At the same time, from what little she had read of the Iliad, in Pope's translation, she thought the mode of men's killing each other at the siege of Troy was so different from that introduced by modern science, as to leave it doubtful whether an artillery officer of the present day would derive much benefit from the perusal."

My mother died, as my sisters and myself were rising to woman's estate. Among other excellent precepts and advice, ratified by her own rigid practice of them, she had left indelibly impressed upon us a just estimate of the beauty of order, diligence, and regula-

city in all the mutual relations, and domestic duties of life. She attached great importance to the careful observation of passing events, and to the advantage of drawing cool, dispassionate, practical inferences from them. She was of opinion that every incident of every day ought to be converted into a source of personal improvement.

“It was better,” she said, “to be shrewd interpreters of people’s thoughts, than mere readers of their speculations.”

“People may *write* anything,” she would add, “but it is not so easy for them to *look* anything:—when a person speaks to me, I always have my eyes as attentive to his countenance, as my ears to his discourse.”

I was thus trained to practical observation in the first place, and to thought and reflection *upon* that.

Reading was inculcated, with speculation and deduction from it, rather as an accessory *help* to knowledge than as a fundamental *basis*

of it. The system of my mother, I am sure, was good ; but we lacked field of observation ample enough to give scope to the exercise, which she prescribed, of the mental powers.

What novel observation, for instance, was I to make upon the daily or weekly hum-drum visits and parties of neighbouring knights and squires, pretty much as Welshified as ourselves ?

What improvement in conversation was I to expect from the country curate of eighty pounds a-year ? What edification was to be hoped for from the village doctor ? and what practical exhibition of wit, gaiety or good-breeding, from the self-important vacuum that ministered among us in matters of law ?

We never went to London, and knew nothing of balls, routs, drawing-rooms, or the opera, but from notices of them in the newspapers, or information given us by those of our guests who spent the season in town.

The population around us consisted (with

a sprinkling of nobility) of baronets, knights, squires, and other gentry, like ourselves, chiefly conspicuous for a "long pedigree." We were too much raised above the tenantry to have any sympathies in common with them; and the burgesses of the little towns around us, as my father had no ambition to be a member of parliament, and wanted, therefore, no votes, were of course beneath our notice.

Thus did I live till I was thirty-five years of age. My venerable father then died; and my brother, with a wife and large family, took possession of the mansion and domain of his ancestors.

The wives of brothers who come late in life to the possession of paternal property, are not remarkable for consorting over amicably with the sisters of their husband, whom they find upon the premises.

*My* sister-in-law was no exception to the general rule. Of a haughty, imperious temper, and at once jealous and impatient of

any preference or respect shown to another greater than that offered to herself, she liked not the deferential air, and civil attentions, shown to me by domestics who had served, and tenants who had respected, my father for many—many years.

Indifference, coldness, sometimes rudeness, characterized her conduct toward me. I could not but contrast it with my long experience of the kindness, never interrupted by caprice, and the affection, not abated by years, which I had experienced at the hands of both my parents.

Even under the large debt of gratitude which I owed to them, however, and with the liveliest sense of their solicitude for my welfare, I had never felt altogether at home at Meredith Hall.

An independent, masculine, and investigating turn of thought had long made the petty concerns of a country life, and the habits of country people, appear to me tame and insignificant. With now curtailed authority,



diminished indulgence, and intimations from my amiable sister-in law—(as unequivocal and frequent as they could well be, compatibly with the coldest rules of civility and decorum)—to be gone, it will not appear surprising if the home of my fathers had become, in my eyes, little better than a hostel.

In the spirit of a traveller who feels that he has over-stayed his time in one place, and in not the best of quarters, I began seriously to consider what should be the next stage of my journey on the great thoroughfare of life.

I had been left in quite independent circumstances by an affectionate aunt, who had bequeathed to me, on her death, the bulk of a large fortune.

I retained a still vivid impression of my excellent mother's practice and admonitions.

The advantages and defects of the system of education pursued by my parents were pretty obvious in their effects, at once upon my mental and physical frame. I had a vigorous constitution, and, albeit a little furrowed in

certain places, a fresh and ruddy countenance. Many people thought the exercise to which I owed this, of hunting and hawking in a hilly country, was more in unison with my father's love of these sports, than characteristic of female decorum. But he was one of the very few men I have ever known, that without transgressing any law of propriety, honour, reason, or humanity, cared absolutely *nothing* for what other people thought. My temper and disposition were as little soured by the insidious encroachments of age, as by the unenviable condition of spinster.

I had for some time, by others, been classed with this unpitied portion of our sex; but I admitted the justice and accuracy of the classification, with as good a grace as possible. I determined not to be ashamed of being old, and had too much contempt for claimants of my years to privileges and attentions exclusively due to youth and beauty, to be myself a candidate for any one of them.

My reading had not been extensive, but it had been tolerably well digested.

The novels, tales, romances, and other ephemeral works of the day, were excluded from the library; and in lieu of them were substituted choice volumes of ethics, travels, history, biography, criticism, and the belles lettres.

Thus trained, with little female society,—having no stage for the exercise of frivolity, and no sphere in which to enact the devotee of fashion,—my mind shot up to a growth as masculine and firm as that of my bodily frame.

I had long desired to become an observer of the wonders of the huge overgrown metropolis of London.

The resolution once taken, my preparations for realizing this desire were soon made.

Arrayed in a blue riding-habit, a small hat and veil, and a white cravat around my neck, I stepped into the carriage that was to convey me to town.

I was accompanied by a female servant

called Winifred, who had been in the family for twenty years, and was now exactly my own age. My little portfolio was full of letters of introduction from the neighbouring gentry to their friends and relations in London.

Thus equipped, I bade a not unwilling adieu to Meredith Hall.

We proceeded slowly along, followed by an old family groom leading my two favourite saddle horses, and driven by a coachman of fifteen years' standing at Meredith Hall.

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## CHAPTER X.

The Story of Martha Meredith continued—

Leonora and Priscilla.

TOWARDS the evening of our second day's journey, we drew near to a romantic village in Merionethshire.

I had letters of introduction to two female hermits there, called Leonora and Priscilla.

It is generally known that these two extraordinary personages, in a fit of romantic friendship, or of disappointed love, retired, as it is called, from the world.

But it is not so generally known what rare combinations they were of solitude and seclusion, bustle and worldly anxiety.

I passed a night with them; and as they



have since made their exit from the stage of this world, I shall shortly relate what I observed of them and their habits.

It had been arranged, by previous correspondence, on what day, and at what precise hour, I should be at their house.

I was permitted, therefore, to drive immediately to the gate of their gothic cottage, without the ceremony generally exacted from their friends, of sending a note from the village inn, to announce their arrival, and to request permission to call.

I thought this ceremony savoured a little more of court etiquette than of hermitage simplicity. But not stopping to speculate, when I had an opportunity to observe, I had no sooner seen Cadwallader and the horses safely deposited at the inn, and given directions for their entertainment for the night, than with Winifred, now quite reconciled to her fate, and my little lap-dog Flounce, I drove to the hermitage.

The sun was just setting as we reached it;

and anything more romantic than the scenery around us, I scarcely ever saw. There was at the same time apparent, as we entered the gate, a finical neatness and finish about the confined premises, that contrasted in a very old maidenish degree with the noble grandeur beyond their pale.

The cottage in which Leonora and Priscilla lived had a thatched roof, and was surrounded by a viranda, sustained by oaken supporters, that might have claimed to be rustic, if they had not been varnished like the legs of a French loo table.

This veranda threw a sombre air over the dwelling, and aided by the creepers which intertwined, and the trees which surrounded it, produced an obscurity and shade better calculated for the tropics than for the mountains of Wales. The small gothic windows of the habitation added still further to its lugubrious aspect. The steps by which you entered the hall were so scrupulously clean, and the carved

oaken door which opened to it was so bur-nished, that I was afraid of passing a threshold which seemed to be kept so much more for show than for use.

Not a footstep seemed ever to have soiled the vestibule; and there was no receptacle in the hall for either hats, bonnets or cloaks. The table that stood there was too like a horizontal looking-glass, to be used by travellers for any one purpose of convenience.

Two punctiliously-dressed females received me as I entered. One took my cloak and muff, while another ran, in a scream of affright, after my beautiful little Flounce, who, having jumped out of the carriage after me, was now frisking over, and unconsciously fouling the chess-board flooring of the marble-paved hall. Seeing herself pursued, Flounce fled for refuge under the oaken table; and there, though the most loving creature in existence, began to snarl at her rough treatment.

Priscilla's maid, in her attempt to lay hold of my glossy pet, fancied herself bitten.

She screamed ten times louder than before, and in her agitation upset the burnished table, which falling upon Flounce's toe, the little dear yelped most pitiously.

The cottage rang with the disastrous crash of the valued piece of furniture.

Meantime Winifred, who had been lifting out of the carriage the various necessary superfluities of travelling *parure*,—dressing-cases, lavender-bottles, oranges, biscuits, baskets, shawls, ruffs, reticules, and parasols,—ran, with her arms full of them, into the hall.

No sooner did she see Flounce limping, and holding up the bruised paw, than, forgetting how she was loaded, she let her burden of accumulated indispensables fall from her arms, and flew to the succour of the weeping beauty of Blenheim.

Nor was she more pathetic in her wailings over her favourite's misfortune, than uncere-

the epithets she bestowed upon the author of it. The fumes of the lavender shed their fragrant influence around; and, what was worse, the scanty remains of a small bottle of port wine were splashed over three or four of the diamond slabs of Parian marble. The pieces of broken glass that lay around, excited utter dismay in the minds of the disconcerted attendants. For myself, I was wound up to a high pitch of agitation; for all I had seen of the fastidious nicety around, only went to confirm what I had before heard of the tender irritability and exactness of the recluses in matters of domestic arrangement.

The drawing-room was on the ground-floor, and a door from the hall ushered you directly into it. This door flew open at the noise occasioned by the affray.

What was my astonishment!—what my terror!—on beholding the two figures that issued from it. They were full seventy years of age, and deadly pale, except where a conspicuous



patch of rouge, having nothing of a natural rose-colour to blend with, looked like a rounded piece of red and wrinkled tree-leaf, laid upon the cheek. It was not rendered less conspicuous by the pale lips and the frizzled hair, partly grey and partly powdered, which, cut into a globular form, left their heads with much of the appearance of a never-used mop.

One of the ladies before me had gold spectacles on : the other seemed to have no speculation, whatever, in the eyes that *she* did glare with. But she had a ponderous gold chain round her neck, to which was appended an eye-glass of no ordinary dimensions.

Both ladies wore blue riding-habits, with an immense display under them of scarlet waistcoat. From this protruded an abundant supply of starched and plaited frill. The lapells of their habits,—like those of gentlemen's coats,—turned back to show the waistcoat. Like it, too, the habits were ornamented in the style of a hussar's jacket, with rows of



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HALIFAX



globular brass buttons. These were sewed on in the form of half-moons, and reached from the shoulders to the short-waist of the vesture behind.

Under the chin, they wore a prodigious roll of muslin cravat, gathered into a large tie in front. Each had a goodly sprinkling of mustachios, which made up, by the decided character, in length and shade, of each individual hair, for the rather scanty manner in which they were strewed upon the upper lip.

One of the ladies had a large mole, of no distant relationship to the wart species, on the flat part of a not prominent chin. Out of this mole there grew some dozen appendages, more like bristles than hair, and giving her very much the appearance of a nodding Chinese mandarin in the window of a tea-shop or shawl-warehouse.

Gold ear-rings were worn by each, and, from the waist upward, nothing earthly besides attested their sex, as far as *this* country is concerned.



Had you met them on the Continent, where *men* usurp those appendages which here *females* are exclusively privileged to wear, you could no more have taken Leonora and Priscilla for *women* than you could have taken Marshal Blucher for one.

A certain flaccidity and rotundity not observable in the countenance of that veteran, characterised the physiognomy of the recluses; but, in all other respects, I thought they were not badly represented by the pictures you see of him on enamelled snuff-boxes. There were obvious traces on the mustachios of Leonora and Priscilla of their frequent appeal to the consoling powers of Lundy Foot's mixture.

Petrified I stood as I beheld the apparitions before me. They looked like two disinterred warriors from another world,—stunted representatives of Gog and Magog.

Afraid as I was of attracting their notice, I yet ventured to make a low and respectful courtesy



to them. I was about to explain, and apologize for the state of uproar and confusion around, when the Amazon with spectacles, not at all regarding me, but addressing herself to one of the maids, exclaimed, in terrific altitude of voice,—

“ Good God ! Barbara, what is all this ? Why if the house were a dog-kennel, the yelping could not be greater ; and if the hall had been rent by an earthquake, we could have heard no louder noise.”

“ Oh ! my Lady,” said Barbara, “ for God’s sake take care of your feet ! The hall-floor is covered with broken glass !”

Just at this moment, the lady with the eyeglass (who I soon perceived was blind) drew up one of her feet in prodigious haste and anger,—

“ I declare to God,” said she, “ I am wounded to the quick !”

I looked towards her, in real anxiety, fearing I should see blood. To my surprise and

satisfaction, however, I only saw Barbara removing from under her mistress's foot the broken bottom of my lavender bottle, on the rounded and innocuous part of which Priscilla had trodden. Scarcely had I obtained some relief on this score, when I beheld Leonora stooping over the disastrous splash of port-wine.

"Merciful heavens!" she exclaimed, "what have we got here? I declare a whole bottle of ink spilt upon the hitherto unstained marble. Why, Deborah, Dorothy, which of you has done this? Come, tell me: none of your hesitations, mouthings, and contradictions, which of you has spilt the ink upon the spotless Parian?"

"La! my lady," said Deborah, "you are quite mistaken: it was'nt us as did it, but this here lady's own maid. And it an't ink, an' please your Ladyship, but a bottle of port-wine as has been spill't."

"Oh!" said Leonora, rising from her in-

cumbent position, biting her lip, and constraining herself, to assume the least irritable air of which, under the circumstances, she was capable,—“ Miss Meredith, I presume.”

“ Yes,” I replied, with as much feigned concern as my wounded pride would permit. “ Sorry I am that my first introduction to you should be marked by so terrible an affray. But really if you could be made to understand how innocently, on my part, and how accidentally on that of the other culprits, it originated, I am sure we should all stand acquitted by your ladyship’s candour and good-nature of any premeditated disturbance or offence.”

“ That may be, Miss Meredith,” she said, “ and I am well inclined to believe that it is so.”

“ From all I know of your family and connexions, I was prepared to find you the pink of decorum, and a pattern of politeness and good sense. But really we are accustomed here to such a quiet life ; our habits are so regular,

and so little interrupted by any occurrence so extraordinary as this, that you must forgive us if you find us more than usually excited and alarmed. We have been fifty years on this spot; and I do not know that in all that time, so frightful a scene of havoc and devastation as the one now around us has presented itself to disturb our tranquillity.

“But I ask your pardon. I say this rather to account for our trepidation, than to blame or embarrass you: so pray walk into the drawing-room with my cousin, and leave me a little, to arrange matters here.”

There was such a preponderance of rudeness over civility in this speech, that unless I had been able to make great allowance for the infirmities of age, nursed by fifty years of solitude and self-indulgence into petulance and irritability, I should certainly have driven back to the inn, to spend there a happier evening than I had any prospect of doing where I now was.

All things considered, I was content to beg Leonora would allow me to restore to order what I had been the sole cause of disarranging.

That she should consent to this, I soon perceived was a most forlorn expectation.

I therefore yielded to her command (for it was much more like that, than a request) to accompany Priscilla to the drawing-room.

As she essayed to lead the way there, she struck her foot against my dressing-box, and stumbled over it. I now saw that the eyes, which I had thought at first were merely without "speculation," were absolutely without vision.

I hastily advanced to prevent her fall, and offer my arm. "Thank you, Miss Meredith," she said with a petulance if possible greater than her cousin's, "I suppose you think I am blind. No, no, I can see as well as you: only I was not looking that way; and to be sure, who expects to find boxes strewed about the hall!"

Pending the performance of this melo-drama, Winifred stood immoveably engrossed by the



misfortune of Flounce, mourning over it, and caressing the sufferer.

This important little personage now appeared, however, my maid perceived with horror the beautifully mosaic-wrought box at the feet of the Philistines.

She rushed forward to its rescue, exclaiming, at the same moment, to Priscilla—

“La! ma’am, are you *blind*? I declare you had well nigh kicked some of the music work, off Miss Martha’s box.”

This was the most unfortunate part of the whole adventure. No longer able to preserve the least control over her temper, Priscilla lifted her large eye-glass to her glass-eye, and with a fierce and sudden jerk, moved in the direction quite opposite to that in which Winifred stood.

The enraged lady and my maid were thus turned back to back. The one was too busily occupied in examination of the box, to be conscious of the storm she had raised in the

breast of the other. It broke forth in an indignant stamp of Priscilla's foot, and the following short, but energetic address to vacuity:—

“You impudent minx, who and what are you that you *dare* thus to speak to me?”

“I tell you what it is, Madam, if you don't get out of the Hall, with your abominable dog and box, and leave my servants to put things in that order of which you seem to know so little, I will have you sent back, and your mistress into the bargain, to the Inn.”

It was not very difficult to bring Winifred's Welsh blood (as she was ever proud to call it) up to her face.

Perhaps she had never, in the whole period of her long servitude, experienced an occasion on which she might so reasonably have allowed it free course as on the present.

Whether consoled by finding the box uninjured, however, or moved to compassion by the melancholy case before her, she contented herself, by saying with great composure,—

“ Well, the poor lady *is* blind, sure enough, She is speaking to the wall; but as for the use of an eye-glass for that purpose, it is more than an ignorant woman like I am can understand.”

If in a Welsh passion, Winifred had thrown the box at Priscilla's head, I am sure she could not more deeply have wounded her, than by the pungent simplicity of her ill-timed remark. I made all possible haste, therefore, to interfere, and put an end to a scene become now exceedingly painful. I ordered Winifred imperatively to quit the Hall, and to take Flounce and the box with her.

I then turned to Priscilla, and entreated her to pardon the rudeness and ignorance of my maid. I expressed my deep regret for all that had occurred, and admitted myself to be the guilty though unwilling cause of it.

This apology, uttered with very unfeigned concern on my part, and fear of farther dis-

agreeable consequences, seemed a little to appease the wrath of these viragos.

A returning consciousness that they had greatly overstepped the pale of good-breeding, wrought something, perhaps, in my favour.

Leonora said she believed that both she and her cousin had caught a little of the contagion of Welsh irritability: she condescendingly begged my pardon, and escorted me into the drawing-room.

Priscilla followed.

It was presently announced that the stains of wine were wiped away, that the pieces of broken glass were gathered up, and that the lady's luggage was carried to her bed-room.

After a few more explanations and mutual apologies, I very gladly availed myself of the suggestion to retire to my room, and dress, after the fatigue of my journey. I found Winifred crying and sobbing there, and Flounce by her side, whining and looking most piteously up in her face.

“ Oh ! Miss Martha,” said my Abigail, without waiting for a word from me, “ is *this* what you call seeing the world ? Why, if we meet with such treatment before we cross the borders of Wales, and that from people of quality, who know all about you and your family, what are we to expect when we get to England, where ten to one but half of ’em did’nt know the squire that’s gone ?

“ I declare those two ladies are more like the hyhenears, as the game-keeper used to tell us about, than human beings.

“ Their maids might be the cubs, for aught I know, of them here animals ; for though they are as sleek as Flounce, they are as fierce as their betters down stairs. Oh ! the gorgeons and hidere dire, as *Paradise Lost* says.”

Mortified as I was by what had passed, I could not help smiling at the pitch of sublimity to which, in her sorrow and indignation, Winifred was now soaring.

She had picked up various scraps and quo-



tations from the books which she used to borrow from me, and ponder over, more lost in admiration of what she did not comprehend, than edified by what was intelligible. I consoled her by remarking that the ladies and their maids whom she treated so uncere- moniously, were not to be at all considered as part of the world to which we were going. They were exceptions, I said, quite out of the ordinary way, to the characters to be met with in everyday life.

Many remarks did she make, homely, but very amusing; and many reflections had she to offer, loose and unconnected, but characteristic at once of shrewdness and simplicity. It was difficult to stop her when she once set out upon a subject. Her conversation was, "*De omnibus rebus, et quibusdam aliis.*"

This is one of the few Latin quotations which I learnt from our village lawyer.

But to return to my subject.

Winifred being at length appeased, Flounce

on velvet, and my own toilet made, I rejoined my irritable friends in the drawing-room.

Having taken an early dinner on the road, I found a sumptuous preparation for me of tea and coffee.

I found also what I considered of much more importance, my hostesses in bearable humour.

I could scarcely call it more: it was certainly not the bewitching fascination of hospitality; and for real *kindness*, I could no more have fancied it in their nature, than I could have expected to find it in Winifred's "*hyhenear*."

Scarcely had I taken the place allotted to me on the sofa, when inquiries, one after another, in close succession, poured in upon me about every family in the vicinity of Meredith Hall, and of the adjoining counties.

I had not time to answer one interrogatory before a second followed. Many of these inquiries were so minute and inquisitorial, as to fortune, pedigree, prospects of marriage, style

of living, equipage, and extent of mortgage, that I was puzzled alternately to think how such subjects should be interesting to persons situated as the Recluses were, and how knowledge so exact could be attained in the retired corner of the world which they occupied.

I felt myself, as I sat by their side, a comparative ignoramus of the fortune and affairs of even those who, from the remotest period to which memory carried me back, had been my immediate neighbours.

They were astonished at my ignorance.

I was not less so at their knowledge; for when they had ransacked the history of every family of the least note within the compass of my acquaintance, they flew off in directions east, west, north and south, and showed an equally intimate knowledge of the details, historical and domestic, of every family of distinction in the United Kingdom.

They finished by declaring it absolutely necessary that, as a first step toward any at-

tempt on my part to mingle with people of fashion, I should study the "Court Guide and Journal," and the "Morning Post," of the last three years, at least. They recommended me to read "Debrett's Peerage," and some other more detailed account of the aristocracy of Great Britain, so as to have it at my finger ends. They advised me to get an introduction to one of the Lady Patronesses at Almack's, and to the Usher of the Black Rod.

Both of them, they added, could give me a great deal of information, as well about those whose acquaintance it would be desirable to cultivate, as about those whom it would be decidedly better at once to avoid.

They assured me that my whole future welfare and comfort in society depended upon the manner in which I should conduct my *débüt*.

In proportion as they discovered me to be a novice in the fastidious science of fashion and high life, their air of protection and self-

importance became more significant, and their tone of instruction,—advice,—compassion,—more and more *prononcé*.

They ended by being most obligingly dictatorial.

I listened without a remark or reply.

Any attempt to indulge in either would have been fruitless, so incessant was the fire kept up upon my right ear and upon my left by those two great guns of fashionable gabble.

They made, before they had done, so terrible a breach in my patience, that I determined to effect a capitulation. I intimated as broadly as several yawns could do, my desire for a truce. They perceived the distress to which I was brought by their play upon me of the heavy artillery of the tongue; and they inferred my desire to quit the field of action, if I might be allowed to retreat unmolested to my sleeping quarters for the night.

Leonora addressed herself to me, accordingly, and said, “You are no doubt tired,



Miss Meredith, from the fatigue of your journey ; and though I had a great many more things to say that would have been exceedingly useful to you, on occasion of making your appearance in the great world, yet as you seem sleepy, you shall withdraw.

“ We cannot allow you to go, however, without seeing our Bijouterie, and choice cabinet of curiosities. It is a privilege we extend only to very particular friends, and to travellers, who like you, have been recommended to us by persons we highly regard. If we did not thus restrict ourselves, our time would be quite engrossed by the number of people (and they too very respectably introduced) who daily apply for permission to view our sanctum sanctorum, as we call it.”

Hard and unexpected as this new condition in the treaty of capitulation was, I not only yielded to it, as a matter of *bien-séance*, but expressed my sense of the obligation conferred.

I was led captive from table to table in the

small Gothic drawing-room, and constrained to hear the history of the innumerable specimens that overspread them, of shells, minerals, china, snuff-boxes, gold rings, Peruvian fillagree, architectural models, small marble vases, alabaster groups and statues, ivory, ebony, and mosaic work.

Here was a blood-stone presented by His Grace the Duke of D——, and there an antique bust of Socrates, the gift of the Duke of B——.

My attention was particularly called to a small grotto of moss and shells, said to be an exact model of that of Calypso, and to several gold coins of the reign of Vespasian, dug up from the ruins of Jerusalem, after its overthrow by Titus.

There were several pairs of Chinese slippers, fans of parrot's feathers used by the wild Indians, and antediluvian specimens of petrification.

One and all of these, and innumerable more

articles of antiquity and vertu, had been the gifts of some noble lord, of some particular friend of a countess, or of some celebrated philosopher or traveller.

I could have been content to hear the fictitious history of the various presents : but I was compelled to listen, also, to the authentic and rather fatiguing biography of the various donors.

From the tables and cabinets, my attention was requested to the pictures hung upon the walls. They were mostly small landscapes, Dutch scenes of rustic life, representations of the holy family and other Biblical subjects, and miniatures.

There was scarcely a great painter, who had ever painted a small picture, that was not named as the master by whom one or other of the collection before me had been executed.

Many of the miniatures were said to be those of distinguished personages, from the reign of Henry VIII. downwards. They were generally

those of the relations—from the nearest to the remotest degree of consanguinity,—of their own families.

Conspicuous among them was one of the last Duke of O——.

Fatigued almost to death, by the endless and most uninteresting details of vanity and egotism to which I was subjected, I flattered myself that now, at last, I was about to be released, and allowed to make good my stipulated retreat.

I was mistaken.—

“Dear Miss Meredith,” said Leonora, “we are so anxious to do all honour to our friends the Wynnes, who have written to us so particularly about you, that we *must* show you our rare and original specimens of autographs and seal-impressions.

“I believe we may safely assure you, that, except in the office of Clarencieux king-at-arms, there is not such another collection in the kingdom.”

*Leonora & Priscilla*

I nearly fainted at the announcement; but no sooner was it made, than open flew the small folding-doors of a rich ebony cabinet, displaying, to my utter consternation,—what? why, twenty-six partitions, each labelled with a black capital letter of the alphabet, set in white ivory.

In every partition there was an enormous packet of envelopes of letters.

By the side of each of these stood a small mahogany box, containing uncountable numbers of seal impressions on wax, in endless contrast of sombre black and glaring red.

They were arranged, and cut off their respective franks, with as much nicety as if they had been for exhibition in the window of the costly seal-engraver in Pall-Mall.

Overpowered by the anticipation of being obliged to examine, in detail, such a deposit of insipidity, I said: “Why, Lady Priscilla, there seems to be subject for curious and edifying research here, for a month, at least.



“I am truly sorry that the fatigue of the day, and the necessity of starting early in the morning, unfit me properly for the examining or appreciating of the interesting exhibition which you have so kindly thrown open for my inspection.

“If you will just favour me with a sight of two or three of the signatures, coronets and supporters of dukes and marquises, I shall feel greatly obliged. I must, then, with whatever reluctance, wish you good night. I am afraid I have already been a sadly stupid guest: but I am indeed quite overpowered by sleep and fatigue.”

In pettish and reluctant acquiescence, her ladyship consented to my request. I strained every effort to keep my eyes open for inspection of a few illegible signatures, which it was their triumphant pleasure, after puzzling me for five minutes with each, to decipher. While nodding over a royal seal, with the novel supporters of a lion-rampant, in fierce opposition to the unicorn, I was brought to my senses by

a very awakening appeal to my side from the elbow of the blind Leonora.

She took from her eye-glass a seal with a crown on it, supported by a hand dexter, and desired I would observe the delicate accuracy of the impression.

This was too much. My temper, though not irascible, in the Welsh sense of the phrase, had now been pushed to the utmost verge of endurance. I rose up, took my bed-room taper, and politely, yet most determinedly said —“ I really *must* go to bed ?”

“ You will surely breakfast with us before you go,” said Leonora. “ We will then take you for a short walk over our grounds ; you must see *them*. I assure you they are considered, on a small scale, the finest in England.”

“ Thank your ladyship,” I replied ; “ I really *cannot* stay, even for so interesting a purpose as that.

“ I am to dine at S—— Park ; and, at my

slow rate of travelling, with my own horses, I cannot possibly reach it in time, if I breakfast here. I would not, on any account, disturb you at the early hour at which I intend to depart. Besides, my arrangements were all made, before I came here, to breakfast at the inn at seven o'clock, and leave immediately afterwards."

"Well," replied she, "since you are really determined to go, the gardener shall be ready to take you to just one or two of the pretty spots on the grounds. I will put up for you the Morning Post for the last fortnight, which he will give you: but be sure you send it back; for we keep it filed, and would not lose a number of it for the world."

I curtsied assent, and took my thankful departure from such an infliction of unbearable thralldom and chilling impertinence, as, having never experienced before, I do not think it possible I should ever be subjected to again.

## CHAPTER XI.

The story of Martha Meredith concluded.

I DID look at the grounds before I drove to the inn. Though laid down in a situation the most romantic and beautiful, they partook of the character of all I had seen within.

There were narrow walks, clipped trees, pretty peeps, here a little summer-house, and there a convenient seat ; in one corner a dairy, and in another a green plot, with posts for drying clothes. There were two large fields with cows in them, close by the house, and a little garden for strawberries, gooseberries, flowers, and wall-fruit. There was a kitchen-garden behind this, and immediately round the cottage some small patches of shrubbery, with here and there a few flower-borders.

Such were the artificial features of the "finest grounds in England." For the natural ones, they were scarcely to be spoiled, even by finical art. But to give an idea of the way in which this had intruded upon the surrounding grandeur, and wild native scenery of the place, I may mention one little incident.

I was conducted by the gardener to the excavation of a rock, on a precipice that overlooked the dashing fall of the river, as coming out from the bridge, it formed itself into boiling pools and foaming eddies beneath my feet. The spray, as it rose above the stream, was bespangled by the morning sun, with all the brilliant colours of the rainbow. Engrossed by the magnificence and beauty of the scene, I did not at first perceive that the recess in which I stood was not only inlaid with moss and shells, but that it contained a library of small neatly-bound volumes, arranged upon rosewood



shelves. As I withdrew a little tome, entitled *Abelard and Eloise*, out from a nest quite near it flew a robin, leaving behind him five gaping unfledged young ones. They opened their beaks, and stretched forth their forked tongues from long transparent bare necks, in such contentious importunity for food, that my impressions of the sublime and beautiful were completely scared away. I went forth from the premises convinced that of all persons ever engaged in laying out grounds, the least competent are spinsters.

As I sat down to breakfast, once more in independence, at the pretty inn of the village, I felt as if I had recovered from a long and dreadful nightmare.

A smoking dish of small trout, just from the stream, was uncovered before me; and by the side of it stood a coffee-pot sending forth its fragrant steam. An old Welsh harper was playing one of his wild mountain melodies in the hall. The river which I had just seen

foaming beneath me, was now gliding away in gentle silence under my window, from the noise and tumult of the cataracts above. Flounce was sitting on her hind legs begging for a piece of muffin. All was right with Winifred, who admired as much the civility of the chambermaids at the inn, as she deprecated the ferocity of those at the hermitage. My carriage-horses were in good order, and my coachman in good humour; while Cadwallader praised the hostlers, and turned out Nell and Sir Watkin in excellent order, and in all their paraphernalia of travelling dress.

I had never been accustomed to rise at six o'clock in spring and summer. It was now the middle of May, and one of its finest mornings. There was a freshness and exhilaration in the air, a stir and bustle in the preparations for departure, and a primitive simplicity about the inn, that contrasted most agreeably with the cumbrous and artificial

restraint under which I had been laid for so many preceding hours.

As I was rising to go, the waiter respectfully entreated that I would enter my name with any remark I might condescend to make, in the visiting-book.

At the same time, he outspread before me a quarto volume of manuscript, nearly concluded.

On hastily glancing over its contents, I found them to consist of names innumerable, and specimens of autography as various as the names.

There were several princes of Saxe Coburg, Saxe Gotha, and Saxe Meinengen. There were vicars, rectors and reverends without end; baronets, and sirs who were no baronets; and crowds of lawyers, honourables, and colonels, on their way from Ireland.

There were merchants from Liverpool, and Londoners from Cheapside; there was Mr. S—— (whom I took for somebody) of

S—— Hall ; and Mrs. N—— (whom I set down for nobody) of N—— Priory, with her four daughters, on a tour.

By the side of a foreign count stood a Manchester manufacturer ; and between an English marquis and an Austrian prince, were two Highland gentlemen from the Orkneys, —with conspicuous designations of *themselves*, by their *lands*.

In compliance with the waiter's request, and with a custom authorized by the many personages, great and small, who had preceded me, I recorded myself as, " Martha Meredith, on a tour of observation."

As I closed the volume I could not but think of that restless propensity in our nature to court notoriety.

I here saw the names of those who having sought glory and distinction " in the cannon's mouth," and found it, still desired to leave, by their signature, a memento of it on the perishing records of a village inn ; while others,

not less important, perhaps, in their own eyes, had, like myself, entered names, whose only claim to celebrity was, that those who bore them were on a tour, or had rocks and hills in the Hebrides.

All being now ready for departure, my little cavalcade moved away in slow procession from the obsequious landlord, curtsying landlady, bowing waiters and hostlers, and groups of little idle urchins who surrounded the carriage. As we ascended the hill which overlooks the valley, I caught a parting view of the solitary cottage, at which I had passed the night. I could not help thinking what a long draught of the bitterest waters of life the two inmates of it had prepared for themselves. They had retired, in a momentary fit of romance or of disgust, from a world they loved ; and feelings of shame or of pride had prevented their return to the society of their friends, and to the momentous gossip of fashionable life. Their tempers were soured



by a solitude abhorrent to them; and their invention, for fifty years, had been on the rack to procure, in a region of frigid monotony, excitement and amusement.

They had found no remedy for their case, but to bring to *them* the world to which *they* could no longer go. They had passed their lives in apparent seclusion, but in reality more absorbed by the petty passing occurrences of fashionable drudgery, than if they had been practically the most enslaved of its votaries.

These, in many cases, are sooner or later overtaken by satiety; but satiety has no healing virtue for diseased imagination, long-indulged irritability, or fastidious self-importance. They strengthen and grow by the food which their own tortuous ingenuity ministers to them: they take a root of gall downward, and bear the fruit of bitterness upwards; and when the physical frame, stretched upon the bed of death, is too feeble

to convey to its mouth the sustenance necessary to preserve life, the irritable temper within shall still be able to cater for *its* supply, and quarrel with the very hand of kindness and solicitude, which lifts to the quivering lips the last nourishment that is to pass them on this side of the grave.

Peace, however, to the manes of the Recluses! may they have found, in another world, the happiness they never experienced, and which it is in vain to imagine that mere seclusion ever *can* confer, in this.

Nothing remarkable occurred during the rest of my journey to town. I travelled by easy stages of thirty miles a-day, as well to spare my horses, as to give Winifred and myself an opportunity of seeing the country.

I never could understand the delight people take in scouring the kingdom, on their excursions of pleasure, as if they were travelling on affairs of life and death. They shall pass through Warwick without seeing the castle,

and through Shrewsbury, without more than a glimpse, while they change horses, at the Cathedral. If they manage to dine at Oxford, they have just time to see the hall, library, and chapel of Oriel; if at Cambridge, they are content to spend a hasty half-hour in the Fitzwilliam Museum, and ten minutes in King's College chapel.

The noblest mansions, the most lovely landscapes, and magnificent park scenery which they pass, are viewed from the carriage, as rapidly as the short description of them is read in the Book of Roads. I have known persons who, having passed through almost every town of any note in the kingdom, could give me no distinct account of any one of them. They had gone, perhaps, to shoot grouse in the north, or to visit the lakes in Cumberland, or to see Staffa and Iona. As well might they have sailed on the open sea as have travelled by land to the respective objects of their interest or curiosity, so complete a blank to them had been every intervening spot.

Winifred and I took matters more quietly, and proceeded more inquiringly.

Whether we are to be set down for this as mere novices, or philosophic observers, I know not; but I am well assured of the truth of my mother's theory, that one hour's observation is worth many hours' reading, especially where objects of sense are concerned. I acted upon it accordingly.

Who ever read a description of Westminster Abbey, or of the Minster at York, that realized to him the intense complexity of feeling experienced on a view of the grand whole, or the vivid accuracy of impression conveyed by an examination of the interesting details of those noble monuments of human skill and ingenuity?

And with regard to men and manners, what mere reader of books ever understood or described them to the life? What description, even of the most acute observers, ever realized to their *readers* the inspiring thoughts and feelings, which gave rise in *themselves* to the

graphic portraiture, the touching characteristic, the accurate, minute delineation, or the glowing, energetic development of the passions which agitate, and of the reason which exalts our nature ?

Every one has heard that one of the orations of Demosthenes, when read by a contemporary of his to some of the Grecian youth, brought tears into their eyes.

“ Ah !” said the reader, “ what would have been your emotions, had you *heard the orator himself deliver* what I so tamely read ?”

On the principles just stated, I heard and saw all I could on my way to town.

I was prepared, on entering it, for sensations of the vast and wonderful ; but what I saw so far outstripped all plausible anticipation, as to leave quite uppermost a feeling of dizzy bewilderment.

I had sent on my own coachman, carriage, and saddle-horses the day before I approached the metropolis of the world ; and I was now



driven by a post-boy with the rapidity of lightning, through streets filled with interminable lines of vehicles of every description.

Onward they moved, in rude, noisy, vociferous din, and in most determined progress, through obstacles which, to uninitiated eyes, appeared absolutely insurmountable.

Winifred repeatedly exclaimed,—

“Lord have mercy upon us!” and “Oh! Miss Martha, call out to the post-boy to stop!”

As we grazed the wheels of a furious omnibus, she laid convulsive hold of me; and shortly afterwards, when in irresistible encounter with a reeling cab, we shook to the very centre every brittle element of it, my maid, no longer able to contain, thrust her head out of the window, and called aloud for help.

I was glad to be soon afterwards set down in the lodgings which had been temporarily taken for me in Brook Street.

One London season so completely satisfied, or rather satiated me, that I resolved to break up my establishment there, and remove to the country.

Before I determined where I should finally fix my abode, I went to Harrowgate, and there spent a month for the recovery of that health, and the recruiting of those spirits, both of which had been so tried by my short campaign in town.

At Harrowgate, to my great surprise, I met Mr. Wynne, a gentleman of good family in my own country, and who had paid his addresses to me ten years before, but was rejected by my parents on account of what they considered his too small fortune.

About that time, my aunt's legacy was left to me, and gave rise to great hopes on the part of my parents, as to the rich alliance which such a fortune would enable me to make.

They hinted this, and suggested an intimate and wealthy friend of the family as a suitable person for my husband.

I told them respectfully, yet firmly, that, having relinquished Mr. Wynne, rather than break through a resolution I had made, and a promise I had given, in early life, not to marry without their consent, I could yield no more. I confessed that Mr. Wynne had obtained my affections; and expressed my determination not to listen, for the present, to proposals of marriage from any quarter whatever.

Both parents were too reasonable and discreet to urge another word. Mr. Wynne had gone to the Continent for economy; and I remained at home till I was classified, at thirty-five, as an old maid, and left it under the circumstances I have described.

Mr. Wynne now lived at the same hotel at which I was: he renewed his suit, obtained my hand, and Eliza was the first and only fruit of our marriage.

Five years after this, Mr. Wynne died. Determined thenceforward to devote my whole time to the education of my only daughter, I took up my abode on this spot which I

had always admired, and in this cottage, so beautifully situated, and of which the grounds so harmonize with the surrounding scenery, as to make them look like one beautiful part of a magnificent whole.

Here I am, probably, for life.

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Eliza thus concluded the little sketch which her mother had drawn of her life; and lifting her eyes from the MS., and turning them artlessly, but full of animation, upon Solomon, asked him "How he liked it?"

But Solomon had been suddenly seized, and was wholly absorbed, by feelings of so complicated, novel, and agitating a character, that, delightful as the scene to him was, and charmed as he was by the story, he could only find utterance for,—

"I like it exceedingly;" and this sentence, short as it is, was uttered very incoherently.

Though happier than he had ever felt in his life, he hastened to take his hat, and say,—

"Adieu!"

Eliza was less agitated, but not less pleased; and she shook Solomon kindly by the hand before she wished him good night.

All this could not escape the penetrating glance and experienced observation of Mrs. Wynne; but as she had a great regard for Solomon, and knew that he was to leave Llangollen in two days to push his fortune in the world; as he was only sixteen, and her daughter just fifteen, she felt no uneasiness on perceiving the evidently incipient affection between them that had taken place. She viewed it as a youthful and romantic ebullition, which, in a few months, perhaps weeks, would evaporate on both sides.

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## CHAPTER XII.

Solomon takes his departure from Llangollen ; and arrives at Glasgow—He here falls in with an old Gentleman and a company of Bagmen—The House of Messrs. Macmunny, Turnit, Turnit and Co.

ALL was now bustle and preparation for the departure of Solomon from his native home. His little trunk and portmanteau were well stocked with linen and woollen clothing: a few jars of marmalade were packed in one corner, and some jam and black-currant jelly in another. There was plenty of new flannel to serve as a preventive of rheumatism, or to operate the cure of it. He bade a sobbing adieu to his own family ; and then proceeded, with a heart weighed down as with a load of lead, to undergo the more trying ordeal of saying farewell to Mrs. Wynne and Eliza.

The coach was to take him up at the end of the lane which led to their cottage.

But when Solomon reached the gate, he had no courage to pull the bell. The certainty that he was now going to see his friends for the last time nearly overpowered him. He became spell-bound ; and as he stood absorbed in his own thoughts, a very monument of grief, and in a state of complete indecision, his brother came running up to him in breathless haste, told him the coach was at the end of the lane, and that the coachman threatened to drive off without him.

Seeing Solomon in such a "swithering state," as he called it, Tammy laid hold of his arm, and dragged his reluctant passenger toward the coach.

Just at this moment Eliza happened to pass the gate, and seeing the two brothers running off in such haste, she concluded that the hour of Solomon's departure was come.

On the impulse of the moment, having simply

her bonnet on, she rushed through the gateway and followed at her full speed our sorrowful traveller. He saw not who was behind in the distance, or he would assuredly have grown restive, and refused to proceed on his journey that day.

As they came within sight of the coach, the two brothers perceived the horses moving onwards at a walk, which promised soon to be a trot. They increased their speed; and flushed and out of breath overtook the vehicle, just in time for Solomon to scramble with all his might, half pushed by his brother, and half drawn by the coachman, up to the box-seat.

Poor Eliza: she too, in breathless haste, soon came to the spot from which the coach had started; but it was now proceeding at a rapid pace, and all she could do was to wave her handkerchief, and sob out: "God bless you." She then covered her face with it, and steeped it in her tears.

Solomon, who had been looking back from

the moment he got into his seat, saw her distress, answered her signal, and in a moment, the coach turning a corner of the road, was out of sight.

Eliza returned home slowly,—cheerless,—disconsolate. Solomon proceeded quickly, but was only made more sorrowful by the rapidity of his pace.

As he passed in rapid succession, and with dazzling impetuosity, the woods, cottages, hedges, and hedge-row trees which skirted on either side his line of route, his eyes grew dim, and his senses became bewildered. He felt that he was leaving all that was dear to him, and he knew that he was rapidly speeding from all that were known to him in the world.

All the entreaties of the good-natured coachman,—moved to compassion by his apparently disconsolate state,—could not win even his momentary attention from his grief to the contemplation of any one of the different

beautiful scenes and places pointed out to him on the road.

He reached his first night's resting-place, and asking immediately for a candle, rushed up to his bedroom, where he gave unbounded scope to his grief.

If it be true, however, in all cases, that "sorrow may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning," it is emphatically true of youth.

In boyhood, our feelings,—yet unchastened by experience,—buoyant, lively, sensitive,—*will* burst forth, and make us miserable for an hour. But still there is in them a natural and a happy tendency to be speedily becalmed: the storm becomes gradually soothed and allayed,—till, spent, and indeed hushed, by a night's violence, all on the morrow is placid, tranquil, and serene.

Thus it was with Solomon. He went to bed in a fit of restlessness and turbulence,—



he arose in the morning composed, quiet, and subdued.

On the third day from that of his leaving Llangollen, he arrived at the George Inn, Glasgow.

He had come to this place with a few guineas in his pocket, on the strength of a letter of introduction which he had from a friend of the family, to the firm of Messrs. Macmunny, Turnit, Turnit, and Co., who had promised that he should have a situation in an extensive mercantile house which they were about to establish in Calcutta.

There was staying at the same hotel at which Solomon stopped, an old gentleman of fashionable demeanour and appearance.

He was about sixty-five years of age. His locks were scanty, thin, and grey: but his countenance, which must originally have been a handsome one, was overclouded by the combined expressions of sorrow, peevishness, and regret. He was irritable, fidgety, ill at ease,

though these symptoms of what was going on within were all under the control, to a remarkable extent, of unobtrusiveness and good breeding.

He was evidently and altogether above the company assembled at breakfast in the large, but comfortless parlour of the inn.

It looked like an eating-room converted into a bazaar.

The old gentleman and Solomon were surrounded by a dozen strange and busy faces, all intent upon eating, but apparently still more anxious about business. They were what is technically styled "Travellers," or "Bagmen;" and much were both the old gentleman and the young Solomon astonished to hear what interest might be taken in muslins, calicoes, cambrics, and accounts.

Their breakfast companions (for they were all seated at one common table) were full of the importance they attached to their several errands, and specific vocations.

One man was commissioned from Birmingham to solicit orders for buttons and razors,—another from Yorkshire to dispose of the best broad cloth in the county. There were men with pattern cards of every sort of thing of the newest invention; and greatcoats, hats, whips, gig-seats, umbrellas, dreadnoughts, glazed capes and brown paper parcels of every dimension lay strewed about the room.

The several owners of them talked and busied themselves incessantly about one thing or other. Here was one writing; there, another spreading out a new pattern; a third was packing his small portmanteau; and a fourth, with many airs, was brushing his coat.

The majority, however, were eating their breakfast with an avidity and appetite quite surprising, as they talked about the cheer of the different inns at which they had lodged, and lamented how rare a thing it was to fall in with an honest hostler.

But what surprised the old gentleman more

than all this was to observe Solomon seated at a corner of the breakfast-table, and, with great *nonchalance*, eating, at snatches, his evidently relished, though much disturbed, meal. His ears pricked up at every word, his eyes turned round at every uncouth sentence pronounced. The old gentleman took an interest in the lad, especially as he seemed to be regarded by the bagmen as little better than a dog in the room. Not one of them spoke to him, but in a tone that he did not seem to like; nor did any of them offer to help him, but in a way that he appeared little to relish. The old gentleman drew his chair close to Solomon's; and endeavoured to get into his confidence by kindness and civility.

He succeeded.

Meantime, a various gibberish was falling upon their ears of the different dialects of Yorkshire, Lancashire, and Somersetshire, with cockney "variations" about "that 'ere cold weal," and a little "am" to it; and about "pulling hup the vinder for a little hair."

One of the bagmen at length addressed Solomon, in rather a magisterial tone, and the following dialogue ensued.

Bagman.—“ Vell, my young feller, come to Glasker fer a college hedicashun, I zuppose.”

Solomon.—“ No, Sir.”

Bagman.—“ Oh ! not a goin' to College ?—Come to be a 'prentice, then, I zuppose ?”

Both the word and the supposition grated harshly on our hero's ears.

Solomon.—“ Not that, either ; I am going to India.”

Bagman.—“ Vy, you looks wery young for so long a woyage. But, owsever, foreign countries is wastly fine, if all wot is said about 'em is true. Hour ouse as shipp'd has good as ten thousand of hall sorts of jem-crackeries, for em ere outlandish blacks, an' Indoos. They vas a vantin on me for to go has supper-carger ; but I vould'nt, cos I doesn't like none of em ere long woyages, and they say as every one as goes to Hindy should carry his coffin out vith him. But as



for you Scotch, it's no more nor you're accustomed to,—because, vy, after all, it's better to go abroad and be drowned, or die of the yellow fever, nor stay at home and be starved.

“Em as knows it, says drownin' is heasier nor starvin'—he, he, he! Vat say ye, young master?”

Solomon.—“I daresay it is as you observe; for I have heard it remarked that the English make everything a calculation about eating and drinking; and that when they cannot get roast beef and plum-pudding, they are not so adventurous as Scotchmen, who can put up with parritch and kirn'-milk.”

As the old gentleman was considering the spirit, and inwardly smiling at the *naïveté* of the youthful adventurer, there stepped into the room a very staid, uncouth-looking young man, upon whose visage Nature had fixed the mark of five-and-twenty, but Care, in spite of Nature, of five-and-thirty. He introduced himself as Mr. Keenyin (Kenyon, I suppose,

he meant), a clerk in the house of Messrs. Macmunny, Turnit, Turnit, and Co.

He wore a threadbare brown (once, no doubt, black) coat, cinnamon pantaloons, short gaiters, or spatterdashes,—as they are called in Scotland,—thick-soled shoes, not made to right and left,—a white handkerchief, very yellow, and, instead of gloves, a pair of “mittens.” Poor fellow! they scarcely concealed his beetroot-looking fingers.

As he entered the room, he took off a hat that, having been often pelted by the pitiless storm, was a mere wreck. It was a very cold morning, and the dripping dew was falling in globules from his lobster-coloured, and rather more than aquiline nose.

Drip fell the globules, not upon a Spitalfields silk handkerchief, but on one of Provost Mac-kashes, bandanas, which by frequent washing, had been so attenuated and discoloured, that if a man had not seen the originals in their native brightness, he could never have believed,

from the sample in the hand of Mr. Keenyin, that the Provost had made by them such a fortune, or earned by them so great a reputation as he had.

The clerk, moreover, was a lean, and lank, and little personage, with a keen eye to business. No sooner had he told the old gentleman's protégé (for so might Solomon now be called) that he was to follow him to the counting-house of Messrs. Macmunny, Turnit, Turnit, and Co., than he addressed himself to the bagmen, "to know how he could be serviceable to them."

"Our house," said he, "as ye a' ken, is ane o' the maist extensive an' o' the best credit in Glasgow ; and though it disna' profess, ether to tak' or to gie' sma' orders, yet if ony o' ye should jist happin to be passin,' may-be ye'll gi'e a look in at the coontin'-house."

The gentlemen travellers all rose and bowed.

With the exception of one, they all promised to call upon Messrs. Macmunny and Co ; but

that one having a good deal more of strut and aristocracy about him than his neighbours, only said, that "*perhaps* he would call;"—not would, but "*might* call."

It happened that the old gentleman had also a letter of introduction to Messrs. Macmunny, Turnit, Turnit, and Co.

It was not upon business, but merely craving a little civility for him as a stranger, from one of the most respectable firms in the city of Glasgow.

Seeing his young friend march off to an audience of those gentlemen, he determined to take advantage of the opportunity of witnessing their interview; and he followed instantler, to deliver his introductory letter.

When the old gentleman reached the counting-house, he found Master Solomon poring over a map; and one of the Mr. Turnits pointing out to him the place for which both were bound; viz. Calcutta.

Mr. Turnit, junior, was going in the capacity

of supercargo, in the same vessel in which the adventurous Solomon was also bound to sail.

As the stranger entered, Solomon was sent away, once more under the protection of Mr. Keenyin, in order that he might be "shown ow'r the town," as Mr. Macmunny kindly expressed himself.

The old gentleman was glad to hear these instructions accompanied by an invitation to his young friend to dine with Mr. Macmunny that day, especially as it was followed by one to himself.

The stranger now began to look about him, and found the three representatives of the house of Macmunny, Turnit, Turnit, and Co. to be three respectable and shrewd-looking persons, each with a pen behind his ear, and seated at a commodious table, covered with green cloth and books, letters, accounts, bills of exchange and bills of lading, with huge bundles of correspondence tied with red tape, spread out before them.



The room was warmed by a magnificent cast-iron stove, and covered with a rich Turkey carpet.

The walls of it were adorned with maps, and many pieces of pasteboard in a folio form, with some fanciful border, and a label to this effect : “ Bills of Lading inwards,” “ Bills of Lading outwards,” “ Invoices to Jamaica,” “ Invoices to Bermuda,” “ The ship Ariadne,” &c. &c.

The old gentleman was rather struck by this array of mercantile state, especially as he had reached the sanctum sanctorum by two separate counting-houses, in which were a dozen busy clerks, surrounded by all the paraphernalia of office, and having about them not a few of the airs of men dressed out in “ a little brief authority.”

The new comer was cordially received by Mr. Macmunny, who told him he was really happy he had arrived that day, for that he (Mr. Macmunny) had a party comin’ to dine wi’ him at five o’clock, an’ that if his frien’ wud

join them on so short a notice, he wud ha'e the pleasure o' introducin' him to the Lord Provost, an' to his next door neebor, Baillie Souterkin. He was glad to say he should likewise meet Mr. Cotton, their Glasgow wit, and his young wife, their Glasgow belle.

"Surely wi' thae temptations," he concluded, taking a cordial grasp of the old gentleman's hand, "Ye'll no' refuse to come."

He was so far from "refusing to come," that he told Mr. Macmunny, he most gladly accepted his invitation; whereupon, shaking him once more heartily by the hand and thanking him, he took his pen from behind his ear, looked at his watch, told him he had some letters to write, and, with good-natured and familiar urbanity, bowed him out of the sanctum sanctorum.

He desired Mr. Macdowlas, one of the head clerks, to "tak him ow'r the town;" and this he seemed to think the greatest compliment he could pay to a stranger.

Mr. Macmunny again said, "Mind, five o'clock"—we're punctual to a minute."

So saying, he shut the door with evident pleasure, as considering, that, although the old gentleman was no part of the business of the morning, he, Mr. Macmunny, had yet done his duty to him, even at the expense of that, which, next to his money, is of all things to a merchant most precious—his *time*.

With this more practical illustration than the old gentleman had ever had of the value of time, and especially of the value attached to it by merchants, he came to the conclusion that time, with them, was only another word for *money*; and he never thenceforward approached a counting-house without specific business, nor ever left it without a conviction that his departure was most welcome.

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## CHAPTER IX.

Solomon discourses to the old Gentleman in English—The Reader is conducted to Mr. Macmunny's House, shown upstairs to the Drawing-room, and thence down-stairs to the Dining-room—He is introduced to the Glasgow Punch-bowl, and to the Glasgow Theatre.

•MR. MACMUNNY'S dinner hour approached; and the old gentleman having agreed with his young traveller, Solomon, that he should go under his escort and protection, asked him how he liked the interview with his employers, and how he relished his invitation to dinner?

Solomon shall speak for himself, it being only premised that he now no longer speaks in Scotch.

The truth is, that during the year of his stay at Llangollen, he had been assiduously

cultivating a knowledge of the English language, not only of its orthography, but of its pronunciation. In this latter department of study he was greatly assisted by his almost daily conversations with Mrs. Wynne and Eliza, who both spoke English with elegance.

Solomon was thus enabled (when he chose it) not only to eschew Scotch phraseology and dialect, but to divest himself, in some measure, of Scotch accent.

He never adopted his English idiom, however, *at home*, because they called it affectation, there.

He was content to make them read and write English; but joined conversation with them in their vernacular tongue.

When with Mrs. Wynne, it was quite otherwise. He marked her pronunciation, set his ear to catch her tone, and assimilated both to hers with rapidity and success.

She, on the other hand, was proud of her English scholar, as she called him.



But to return.

Solomon addressed the old gentleman thus,—

“As to the interview with my employers,” said Solomon, “I was exceedingly pleased with it ; and any little misgiving I had, on a consideration of my inability to perform the duties required of me, vanished, when Mr. Macmunny began to speak.

“To be sure, I was a little surprised with the grandeur of the counting-house, the number of clerks, the room of the partners, the maps, books, and labels.

“My hearing one of the gentlemen called the manager of the ‘Foreign Department,’ made a great impression upon me ; but, as I say, it soon wore off, and I don’t see why I shouldn’t make a fortune as well as they have done.

“As for the invitation to dinner, I was once in the mansion of a great personage in Edinburgh, and had there been ushered by one

of three powdered lacqueys into the presence of the lady of the house.

“ She was seated amidst hangings of silk and damask, dressed with eastern pomp, and surrounded by couches, sofas, ottomans, and footstools.

“ The tables of the splendid apartment were covered with books, handsomely bound and gilt, and with perfumes in crystal bottles variously coloured and cut. Near to one of the windows stood an elegant harp. In the middle of the room there was a grand pianoforte.

“ The richly-carved mantel-piece was covered with china vases, and other costly ornaments, and surmounted by a brilliant mirror.

“ A large chandelier was suspended from the ceiling, and underfoot was a carpet of downy softness.

“ An air of grandeur and repose overspread the whole. The lacqueys were as impudent-looking fellows as I ever saw.

“ Now, as I don't think anything I am likely

to see at Mr. Macmunny's can be grander than that, I am not the least afraid to go there to dinner."

Solomon having thus delivered himself, he and the old gentleman marched off to dinner.

They soon found that Mr. Macmunny's establishment was little inferior to that of the "great lady in Edinburgh."

Scarcely had they knocked at the door, when it was opened by a footman, while a genteel-looking butler, in black, and two more of the party-coloured tribe essayed to take their hats. The old gentleman's was delivered up, as a matter of course, to the servant; but when he came to Solomon,—“Thank you,” said he, “I’ll just put it down here myself.”

A second servant asked their names. They were given; and the third one, already half-way up stairs, called down to them, “This way, gentlemen, if you please.”

Upon this, Solomon said to the old gentleman, in a whisper, as they followed to the draw-

ing-room, “ ‘ This way, sir,’ and ‘ If you please,’  
—They are not so impudent as they look.”

As the names of the two strangers were announced, they were startled by the dazzling display offered to their view.

The first thing that arrested them, especially the old gentleman, was the great blaze of light in the apartments.

The next thing that riveted their attention was the finery, the prodigious finery of the ladies.

The old gentleman thought that a whole warehouse must have been emptied to furnish it; and Solomon was sure it would have stocked every haberdasher's shop in the town of Dullborough, or Llangollen, for a month.

The ladies all sat silent,—which upset the theories of the old gentleman on female loquacity; and they appeared stiff, which he accounted for, on the score of a prudential fear that too much motion might crumple their gauze dresses, or bring down a knot of ribbon

from its conspicuous position on a full-mooned muslin tiara.

Their gowns were so decorously long, that he could only observe one or two rather large feet, and not very slender ankles, as supporters of the female form.

The gentlemen were grouped in the middle of the room, all scrupulously dressed in shoes and silk stockings.

They had inexpressibles tied at the knees, exhibiting brawny calves; and their cravats made a considerable display of white muslin, tied in not a very precise fashion under their chins.

But guess, if you can, the astonishment of both guests (for there was a great sympathy between the old gentleman and young Solomon), when setting themselves to listen to the whispering hum of the conversation, they found that, with the simple substitution of Scotch accent for English dialect, they might as well have been in the midst of their "travelling" compa-



nions at the George.—“ Rums is up,—Muscovados is down.—Yarns is a shade higher, and calicos a bawbee lower ; gingham is rather lookin’ better, an’ jaconots is a little fawn—our frien’ the Baillie’s bandanas is a perfect drug.’ ”

These, and such remarks as these, in succession, too quick to be copied, even by a writer of short-hand, made up the conversation of the Glasgow gentlemen.

“ Have you heard,” said the Lord Provost, “ o’ the arrival o’ the Demarara frae Demerara wi’ a cargo o’ sugars ? ”

“ ’Od, they say they’re the bonniest sugars that’s been in the market this mony a-day.

“ I’ve gotten some real fine limes by her, and by our friend Douglas’s first ship frae Jamaica, I’m promised some nice auld rum.

“ By the way, Neebor Norace, our joint speck in pullicats has turned out but a puir concern. They’ll no pay cost and charges.”

Here his Lordship’s discourse was interrupted by the announcement that dinner was

ready ; and after much rustling of silks, and ceremonious advance of successive gentlemen to offer their arms to the ladies, the whole party moved in couplets out of the room, leaving Solomon and another youth to bring up the rear.

The old gentleman gave Solomon his arm ; and as they walked down stairs, the latter whispered his friend to sit next to him.

At dinner all was sumptuous and superabundant. The curling smoke rose from the just uncovered dishes like so much incense from a feast in honour of the gods.

One course succeeded another ; the champagne corks flew ; the hock was handed round ; a magnificent epergne groaned under a bouquet of artificial flowers as large as that used to “busk George Heriot ;” and gilt china, silver plate candelabras, and a blaze of light as in the drawing-room, from a dozen wax candles stuck into a large chandelier, almost bewildered the vision.

There was every now and then a loud laugh from some one or other of the guests, arising, as the old gentleman and Solomon supposed, (for no explanation was given of it) from some good saying or joke of some one of the company.

They heard one vivacious-looking middle-aged gentleman say to a young lady near him, —a significant smile playing on his countenance :—

“Du ye ken, Miss Spinner, that I was very near bein’ your father?”

“It’s as sure’s death, I was at yae time within an ace o’ marryin’ your mother.”

Miss Spinner blushed in deep accordance with her crimson ribbons; two or three of the company heard the joke and laughed, till Mrs. Macmunny, the lady of the house, insised that it should be made public, for the general good.

It was so; and a laugh so universal and so loud was in consequence set up, that Solo-

mon, who had read in Lord Chesterfield's Letters that it was not polite to laugh, began to consider whether *his* book or the *Glasgow merchants* could be wrong.

The whole company agreed that Mr. Cotton was a great wag, and Miss Spinner was told "not to mind him."

At length the ladies arose to depart, and the gentlemen simultaneously stood up. The old gentleman fancied, as the former passed out of the room, that the frigidity which he had observed among them up-stairs, was considerably thawed by the heat of the dining-room, the good dinner, and the sparkling champagne; for, as they walked out of it, many condescending nods and winks were passed between them and the merchants.

Some of the latter, as their fair friends rose from their respective chairs, went the length of patting them on the shoulders.

Scarcely were the ladies gone, when Mr. Macmunny, moving to the head of the table,

was soon surrounded by the paraphernalia for punch-making.

Limes, sugar, cold water, old Jamaica rum, were all put down by the butler at the right hand of Mr. Macmunny. The guests drew their chairs towards his end of the room; and became scrutinizing and intent on the process of what they called his "brewin'."

With their elbows on the table, and their eyes upon the punch-bowl, that might have floated a West Indiaman, they gazed, sipped the beverage, remarked upon it, and suggested alterations,—till the brimming and delicious potation, being accommodated to the palate of every fastidious critic present, the landlord gave, with the punch-ladle, a gentle and knowing tap on the edge of the bowl.

At this signal, all the glasses were handed in, and ranged in a semi-circle around the brimming and fragrant vase.

There they stood, like so many thirsty pilgrims round a well, till one after another,



replenished with rum punch, was made to travel back to its longing master.

At this period of the entertainment, Mr. Macmunny kindly suggested that if Solomon was tired of sitting where he was, he might go to see the Play.

He added that he would send one of the servants to show him the way.

Solomon gladly accepted the offer; but as the old gentleman had seen all he desired to see of a Glasgow party, he requested permission, *instead* of the servant, to accompany Solomon. With the greatest reluctance, and not till after half-a-dozen glasses of punch had been quaffed, his petition was granted.

The two friends, therefore, took their leave. As they paced the long dark streets, many and various,—sometimes original, and sometimes, no doubt, *very* outré, were Solomon's reflections.

First he considered (and he expressed himself aloud) how he should possibly be

able to embody all the important events of the last three days in his journal.

Then he observed, how little connexion there was between grammar and money,—but what close alliance between splendour and calicoes.

He tried to guess what might be the expense of a Glasgow lady's dinner dress; and what might be the fortune of Mr. Macmunny.

He wondered whether, if he should ever make a fortune, he would be satisfied with it, or, like my Lord Provost, be making "joint specks in bandannas" long after his fortune *had* been made.

He gave a sigh, as he considered how much more important a book than any other the *ledger* must be in Glasgow; and that Cæsar's Commentaries, Ovid's Metamorphoses, and even Horace, Virgil and Homer, were here superseded by the Mercantile Vocabulary, the pages of which bore record only of fustians, dimities, and cotton twist.

Solomon wondered how merchants could

ever have time to make love, when they must be so busy making money; and he came to the conclusion that they probably saved much of the time that others dedicate to courtship, by striking a bargain *at once*.

He then proceeded to express his opinion that it was possible the ladies in large trading towns might get so unavoidably accustomed to business, as to make even a *trade* of the tender passion; and he not only began to sigh like a lover,—but almost to cry like a boy, as he thought of his first love, and of the possibility of feelings so delightful as those connected with Eliza, being bartered away by a Glasgow lady for a silk gown, or a fine cap and ribbons.

He entertained reluctantly the idea that this *traffic* in connubial love,—this conversion of matrimony into a “matter of money,”—was probably not more practised in Glasgow than among the noble,—the elevated,—the rich,—the polished,—and the gay.

He remarked, when thus brought together,

how miserable must be the devotees of greatness, and yet more abject slaves of the greatest of all jilts,—fashion.

The old gentleman listened, with no little amusement and surprise, to the philosophic out-pourings of Solomon, who became hence-forward a decided favourite with him.

Our philosopher's reflections were interrupted by the arrival of himself and his senior at the theatre.

They went in, and were surprised to find the “heroes of the buskin,” in a house almost as dark as were the streets, declaiming to empty benches in the pit; to a patched-up-looking party here and there in the boxes; and to a few weaving gods and goddesses in the upper regions. Solomon supposed that all the Glasgow gentlemen must be busy drinking punch, and all the Glasgow ladies taking tea by themselves, in a state of separation from their husbands for the night.

Neither of our travellers, old or young,

flushed a little as they were by the exhilarating effects of their entertainment at dinner, had much sympathy with the dulness, darkness, and solitude around them.

The old gentleman looked at Solomon, and for the first time in his life, saw a youth more than half asleep over a play. He jogged him, and said, "Shall we go?"

Solomon's reply was, "Oh yes, I am very tired."

The acting was indeed miserable, and the house so lugubrious as to have the air of a room fitted up with black drapery for the reception of a dead body to lie in state.

They went home to the "George," and found that their "traveller" companions had been deep in their potations, and were now uproarious in their carousals.

The old gentleman quietly asked for two candles, saw Solomon to his bedroom, and walked on tiptoe to his own.

He requested that they would call him and



his young friend at six in the morning; for he had determined to accompany the youthful traveller to Greenock. He was there to join the ship that was to convey him on his voyage to Calcutta.

The old gentleman had taken so great an interest in Solomon, that he not only determined to see him off, but lay half the night thinking how he could keep him at home.

Mr. Macmunny, with one of the Mr. Turnits, were to meet them at Greenock; and before the old gentleman fell asleep, he resolved to make proposals for Solomon's remaining behind.

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## CHAPTER XIV.

In which the Reader has a peep at the Clyde and at Dumbar-ton—The old Gentleman makes an exchange, “paying the difference.—A separation.”

ON a bleak and boisterous morning of spring, the old gentleman and Solomon found themselves in a jingling, rattling chaise and pair, *en route* for Greenock. The wind found its way through a dozen chinks and apertures, and was whizzing about their ears. It made the loose windows of the vehicle keep time with its jolting motion, in loud and terrific dissonance.

The mode of travelling between Glasgow and Greenock is almost universally by steam :

but as the old gentleman intended to return by this superior mode of conveyance, he resolved upon seeing, by land, one way, the country he was to view from the water by another.

He admitted into his chaise, by special request, a third companion, who, on hearing that he and Solomon intended to go to Greenock by land, said he had so often gone by steam, that he should like to accompany them.

As the mists cleared a little away, they caught a glimpse of the far-famed Dumbarton Castle, and of the curling smoke that arose from the town of the same name, at the base of the rock on which the castle stands.

“Sir,” said Solomon to the stranger, “what noble rock and castle is that, standing in the midst of the waters?”

“Oo, that’s Dumbarton castle,” said he: “to be sure it’s very fine, and it’s ane o’ the greatest beauties o’ the Clyde. It’s very edefyin’, too, to look at the fine smokin’ glass works o’ Dumbarton town. They shew that there’s no

sic' an a distance, as some wud gar' us believe, between the noble works o' natur' an' the utility o' tred.

There was something in this remark that struck the old gentleman as being rather mercantile ; and he could not say " amen " to it.

Ever since he had come to Glasgow, he had found the uppermost, the overwhelming, consideration that of trade ; and on the discussion of every question, amid much sagacity and good sense, he found that commerce and money were the grand absorbing topics of the Glasgow merchant's discourse, and occupied almost exclusively his anxious thoughts.

Their travelling companion soon fell again into a sound snore.

Solomon's attention on the contrary was riveted, as well as his admiration excited, by the opening of the grand, varied, and majestic scenery of the Clyde. He gave himself up to the enchantment drank in by the eye, and to the pleasing sensations that through this organ take possession of the inner man.

He contemplated and admired the huge black mountains, with the clouds resting, in the distance, on their midway height; the beautiful and more distinctly visible cone; the mist that, driving with rapid scud, now hid what had been shut up in the darkness of its womb, and anon discovered some magnificent landscape.

The sea-gulls were cawing, and the agitated river was splashing up against the sides of the busy barks that stemmed its current, or glided down its stream.

All spoke to Solomon's heart a language from nature so eloquent, that he was charmed with the converse.

He attributed their companion's somnolency to the deadening power of familiarity with the scene; and he so expressed himself to the old gentleman.

They reached Greenock, not unaptly called the *aquarium vas* of his sublunary majesty Abaddon. It rained when they arrived there; it rained while they remained there; it pat-



tered, thundered, and rained when they left the place.

The old gentleman having clearly ascertained from Solomon that he would much rather stay at home than go abroad, determined, if possible, not only to gratify his wish, but to give him an agreeable surprise.

On arrival at the Tontine Hotel, Greenock, our two travellers found that Mr. Macmunny and Mr. Turnit had preceded them by some hours.

“Do ye ken, Sir,” said the former to the old gentleman, “that we had mair than a hundred passengers on board o’ the Eclipse, an’ no’ ane o’ them wud believe that I had a frien’ travellin’ to Greenock in a post-chaise?”

“Well,” replied the old gentleman, “I have no doubt of it. They forget, however, that they have all had the land view of the Clyde, while I never had, being now for the first time in my life in Scotland.

“Besides,” said he, “I intend to give variety to my trip, by taking the view from the river on my return.

“ But, Mr. Macmunny,” said the old gentleman, taking the Glasgow merchant by the arm, and walking him to the window, “ I have something to say to you that interests me a good deal more than even a sail upon the Clyde.

“ What do you think of Solomon ?”

“ I think him an exceedin’ sagacious young man,” replied Mr. Macmunny.

“ So do I,” said the old gentleman.

“ Weel, noo, to business. Have ye onything mair to say about him ?”

“ Yes,” was the reply.

“ I have found out, on our journey, that Solomon, though ready to go abroad, would rather stay at home. He does not like to leave his family, nor, perhaps, some other person in Llangollen.”

“ Oh ! but ye ken,” said Mr. Macmunny, “ these are the mere whims o’ youth, an’ ebullitions o’ boyish fancy.”

“ I do not think, in this case, they are,” said the old gentleman.

“Why,” said Mr. Macmunny, “wha is na’ sorry for twa-three days to leave his hame, his country, and, maybe,—young birkie as Solomon is,—his sweetheart ahint him?—That’s human natur’; but let him ance break ground, an’ gang to a foreign lan’, an’ ye’ll soon see how the youthfu’ sprig will put out its blossoms, and look as if it had never been exposed to even a’e day’s winter o’ sorrow.”

This was, perhaps, the first simile in which the good merchant had ever indulged, and it was certainly uttered with unconsciousness of its belonging to any particular figure of rhetoric.

“I don’t agree with you,” said the old gentleman.

“Weel,” a favourite way of commencing his orations, “what,” said Mr. Macmunny, “would you be at?”

“I should like Solomon to remain in this country,” replied his friend.

“That’s impossible,” said Mr. Macmunny, with emphasis.

“The ship’s to sail in twa or three days; an’ Mr. Turnit canna’ gang to Indy without a clerk.”

“Is there not a clerk in your office,” asked the old gentleman, “that would *exchange*, as they say in the army, with Solomon, receiving the difference?”

“Half-a-dizzen,” replied Mr. Macmunny. “But then I promised the auld frien’ that recommended Solomon to me, that he should hae a situation abroad; an’ that on account o’ the higher salary that gangs wi’t.”

“What *is* that salary?” asked the old gentleman.

“A hundred a-year, bed, board, an’ wash-in’,” replied Mr. Macmunny, “to be increased at the rate o’ twenty-five pounds a-year, till maybe, at the end o’ ten years, if he behaves himsel’ weel, and especially if Mr. Turnit dies (as ten to ane he will), Solomon wud become a partner.”

“What,” in reply, asked the old gentleman, “is the salary, which you pay to one of the

clerks that would be willing to take Solomon's place?"

"Fifty pounds per annum, on an average," said Mr. Macmunny, "an' without ony prospect o' risin' in the concern, or o' ever becomin' a partner."

"Besides, though they have only half o' Solomon's salary, they've twice his wark. We gied Solomon the best place at our disposal, in order to oblige our frien'; an' I wudna' like to disappoint him."

"But suppose," replied the old gentleman (he had been in the army), "I were to pay the difference,—that is to say, suppose I were to add 50*l.* a-year to the salary of the Glasgow clerk, on condition that Solomon, instead of going to India should *become* the Glasgow clerk, and that the present Glasgow clerk should take Solomon's place in Calcutta, would your friend, do you think, be satisfied, and would you have any objections to the commutation?"



“I am sure,” said Mr. Macmunny, “that my frien’ wud be mair than satisfied; an’, as for me, it would gie me great pleasure to promote Mr. Keenyin to India, an’ let Solomon hae his stool in Glasgow.”

“It is a bargain,” said the old gentleman.

“Write at once to Mr. Keenyin to prepare for embarkation. Say not a word to Solomon of what has passed. We shall allow him to remain on board the vessel, until she is actually underweigh; and then we shall bring him ashore with ourselves.

“I would not only do the lad a favour, but do it in a way at once to surprise him, and rejoice his heart.

“Tell Mr. Keenyin to say not a word of his present appointment. I am aware that he has neither friends nor relations,—nobody, therefore, will care much about his departure; and when he goes, as you and I do, on board of the ship, he may be supposed to go to see her off.”

“ I like the plan,” said Mr. Macmunny.

He instantly issued his private instructions to Mr. Keenyin, and Mr. Keenyin delighted, much beyond his power of utterance, instantly accepted the proposal.

To the astonishment of his brother clerks, he was one morning missing from a seat on which he had been a fixture for ten years.

In three days after the receipt of Mr. Macmunny's letter, with a small trunk and bag, which he carried in his own two hands, and with an unwonted smile on his naturally rueful countenance, he made his appearance at the Tontine.

Mr. Macmunny assured the old gentleman that he had never seen such an expression of joy on Mr. Keenyin's face before.

With a sly look and a wink, Mr. Macmunny told his friend, “ That small as Keenyin's salary had been, he was sure he had never spent the half o't ; and that he was no' less sure he would mak' his fortune in Indy.”

“ I hope so,” said his friend.

Everything was now ready for the ship's departure; and the old gentleman, Mr. Macmunny, Mr. Keenyin, and others went on board with Solomon, as for the purpose of bidding him adieu.

All was bustle and preparation to get away. They were hoisting the last bales of merchandize into the vessel; the busy passengers were arranging their luggage; boats were going and coming to and fro; the captain looked as if the business of the nation were upon his shoulders; while ducks and geese, and pigs and turkeys were making a discordant din, as, cooped up, they seemed to wonder at their transition from the barn-yard to the quarter-deck.

There was an uncountable number of cabin passengers on board.

Solomon had a short history from the captain of their various circumstances and professions.

The object of all was of course one and the

same,—to make their fortunes; and it was no uninteresting speculation to contemplate the specimens of Scotch enterprise, and to consider the characters of the individuals, by whom, under the patronage of men of capital, foreign expeditions are undertaken from this country.

“There’s a tall doctor,” said the captain, “gawin’ wi’ us, that fell out o’ his practice at Barleycorn, wi’ drinkin’.

“There’s a clothier frae the auld town o’ Ayr, wi’ a short arm an’ a brown wig.

“There’s a shoemaker frae Edinburgh wi’ a squintin’ eye; an’ a pock-pitted weaver frae the Gorbals.

“There’s twa wine-merchants frae Leith; half a dizen sma’ manufacturers frae Glasgow and Paisley; an’ a man o’ the name of Mitchell that’s been drummed out of the lang town o’ Kirkaldy.

“Then there’s the supercargo, ane o’ the partners o’ Messrs Macmunny, Turnit, Turnit and Co.; yoursel’ ye ken,—an’ I think that’s a’.”

The list of the passengers, thus graphically, in the old gentleman's hearing, given, by the captain to Solomon, struck him as affording a curious specimen of the British population, from that part of the United Kingdom called Scotland, that was destined to people, civilize, and enrich our possessions in India.

As the old gentleman thought of Solomon's projected voyage, and concluded that there must be many young men bound from Caledonia on similar expeditions, he inferred that it was owing to an early transplanting from their own soil to another of such young shoots, that we hear so much of the thriving condition abroad, in riper years, of the scions of North Britain.

Though exotics when they first reach a foreign shore, yet, from being removed in the early spring of life from a poor country and a cold climate, they soon begin to flourish in a rich land and genial atmosphere, till springing upwards, and taking root downwards, they



become as goodly plants in appearance, and in fact, as the best indigenous ones of the soil.

The old gentleman thought, too, that this national spirit of enterprise was strongly illustrated by the crowds which lined the piers and hurried through the different passages between the docks, to see the vessel get under weigh.

The sails being loosed, the capstan was manned, and the anchor weighed. The masts were tossing their stately heads, and the prone figure of a Mercury at the bow rose and fell with the motion of the coming wave. In a few minutes, the anchor was a-peak, and the gallant ship glided from her moorings among the shouts and waving of handkerchiefs of hundreds of spectators, who wished her a prosperous voyage.

Hitherto, not a word had been said to Solomon of the intention to keep him in his own country.

Mr. Macmunny's small but beautiful yacht was in attendance to take the returning party on shore.

The little cutter-rigged vessel, with flowing ensign and pendant, and sails in the wind's eye, played round and round the large, unwieldy merchant ship, as a dolphin might be supposed to play round a whale, or a flying fish to skim upon its moist wings the surface of the deep before the dolphin.

As the vessel was passing Gourock bay, Mr. Macmunny took Solomon down to the cabin, which had been purposely left for their exclusive occupation.

Mr. Macmunny then briefly related to his astonished and nearly bewildered hearer what had passed with the old gentleman.

"Depend upon it," said Mr. Macmunny, "ye've gotten a staunch frien' in that auld gentleman."

Solomon's gratitude was unbounded, but his utterance was choked. He could have danced for joy, but he stood immoveable, till a rather heavy lee lurch of the ship reminded Mr. Macmunny that a fresh breeze had sprung

up, and that it was time to get into the yacht and return.

Addressing Solomon, on whom Mr. Macmunny observed a strong effort to articulate something, he told him that he understood very well what he meant,—“To say naething about it; but to gang awa’ up the companion, an’ get his luggage into the yacht.”

On reaching the deck, Solomon saw the old gentleman standing on the poop.

Unable longer to contain, he ran up to him, and, with his head upon his friend and patron’s breast, the poor fellow gave vent in a flood of tears to the swelling emotions of a grateful heart.

After this, he went with great alacrity and got his luggage.

Nothing could exceed the astonishment of captain, passengers, and crew, when they saw Solomon coming up to each of them individually, and shaking them cordially, but, even in his joy, sorrowfully, by the hand.

“I thought,” said he, addressing the captain, “that we were to have been fellow-passengers for three or four months, and to have shared, upon the vast ocean, the perils and the sympathies common to those who sail in the same ship. So I had begun to feel as if every one on board, even the goats, the sheep, and the turkeys, were friends.

“But fate and my good fortune have ordered it otherwise.

“Farewell; and God be with you all.”

At this point of his leave-taking, Mr. Macmunny hurried Solomon over the side of the ship into the yacht, and immediately followed himself.

The outward-bound vessel, which had been lying-to, now made all sail in one direction, and the yacht spread her white canvas in another.

A general waving of handkerchiefs took place on both sides; and was mutually continued till this last parting signal of good will was no longer discernible.

## CHAPTER XV.

The party returns to Glasgow ; on which occasion Mr. Macmunny is brought more prominently before the reader.

Down to a sumptuous luncheon sat Mr. Macmunny, proud of his fine ship and of her valuable cargo.

On his right hand was seated the old gentleman, entirely pleased with his day's work. Next to him sat happy Solomon, full of gratitude to his benefactors, and especially to him on his left, through whose instrumentality he was now restored to his native country, or rather had never been allowed to leave it, but in prospect.

Many more friends of Mr. Macmunny were congregated around the dinner-table of the



yacht, and partook of ham, and fowl, and venison, port, champagne, punch, and madeira, till the old gentleman thought if the ship's homeward voyage were to bear any proportion to the plenty and exuberance with which the commencement of her outward one had been celebrated, the returns could not fail to be superabundant.

In less than two hours from the time of the yacht's leaving the ship, the whole party was transferred to a Glasgow steamer.

The old gentleman and Solomon, both admirers of the works of nature, were glad of the prospect of seeing, as they sped over the waters of the Clyde, the scenery on both shores in all its varied majesty and beauty.

On the deck of the steamer there were passengers of every grade. They were chiefly, however, merchants, manufacturers, and their wives, returning from trips they had made to their villas, or from the numerous sea-bathing

quarters,—Rothsay, Gourock, and Dunoon, which skirt and adorn the banks of the Clyde.

Mr. Macmunny was in high glee, and presented to the old gentleman's eye the *beau idéal* of a Scotch merchant.

He was a rare compound of shrewdness, sagacity, observation, knowledge of every-day life, especially of his own vocation, tintured with a slight degree of cunning, and neither affecting, nor capable of assuming, any approach to refinement or elegance of manner.

Mr. Macmunny was a corpulent and portly personage.

He had been Lord Provost in his day; and, in respect for the office, he dressed in an ample, but not very fashionably cut suit of black. He wore a white cravat, a broad-brimmed hat, a great display of gold chain, at the end of which dangled many seals; and it was as evident, from the rotundity of his abdominal region, that he was a gastronomist, as, from the purple tincture of his nasal organ,

that he was no equivocal devotee of rum-punch, port wine, and East India madeira.

Mr. Macmunny was bald, and the stunted crop of hair, which he had between ear and ear on the occiput, was what might be called a yellowish grey.

He attributed this early sign of coming age (for he was not above sixty) to the harassing cares of a mercantile life,—to heavy losses in the West India trade,—and to two or three bad speculations which he had made in Paisley muslins to Calcutta, for returns in cochineal.

“Well, but, Mr. Macmunny,” said the old gentleman, “you are reported, after all, to be one of the richest men in Glasgow.

“Your house is in the highest credit ; you are influential in corporate affairs ; a leader in private society ; and you have a fair wife and a goodly family.

“What more *would* you have?”

“Ay,” replied Mr. Macmunny, “that may

be a' very true; bit when ye've ance made siller, an' set down a certain sum at the credit o' stock, or ta'en't out o' the concern, an' invested it in bank shares, ye dinna' like to see twenty thousan' clippet frae the wings o' your surplus capital yae day, an' ten thousan' fleein' awa' the next.

"Ye see ye're no' a merchant, an' maybe ye dinna' enter into thae kind o' considerations.

"But, if you had haen as muckle trouble an' hard wark to mak' your siller as I've had to mak' mine, ye wudna' just think so lightly o' the loss o't.

"Suppose ye've a bonny wife, an' a bonny wane, an' that your wane's ta'en awa' by the han' o' death, wud the consolation remainin' on account o' the wife mak' up for the sorrow for the loss o' the bairn?

"No' a bit o't; there's naething but time that can help us o'er thae misfortunes; an' when we're striving our best to forget them, that

auld chap in the mean time is makin' furrows in our forehead, an' clippin' our hair wi' his shears till he leaves us bald, as ye see me.

“ Look ye,” he continued, “ it's a very fine, an' nae doubt often a very usefu', thing to lay down general principles supported by plausible, an' sometimes philosophical, reasonings, about the conduct o' human life. But it's yae thing to *admire* thae principles, and it's quite anither to act on them.

“ I can admire them as weel as my neebors ; but, as I'm no' a book-man,—as I see that books and men are often very different things,—as I've little time for readin', and think, if I had plenty, that it wud be better spent in makin' siller,—in looking into my ain heart, an' in tryin' to find out what's goin' on in the hearts o' ithers, I dinna fash my thoomb wi' theories.

“ I like to study life as I find it, and to shape my course by the principles that I canna' deny are the uppermost in my ain heart.



“Noo, what do I see in the warl', in spite o' a' the books that's been written about it?

“Why, that the great, aye the *exclusive* aim o' man is to get siller.

“Some speak about fame; but it's siller they a' want.

“It's o' nae use to degrade this word by ca'in't mammon.

“If mammon it be, we're a' worshippers o' him; an' it's nonsense to tell me, (begging your pardon,) that the merchant stoops lower at his shrine than ony ither body.

“Will your clever advocate undertak' a cause without a fee? Will he be sittin' up a' night in his chammers for reputation's or for justice's sake?

“Will the doctor gang an' see a deein' body without expectation o' fee or reward?

“What do men draw pictures for?—It's a' for siller.

“What do statesmen, aye even your paw-trits, mak' speeches for?—just for *siller*.

“ The fine author that writes a sentimental novel, what is he thinkin’ o’?—*Siller*.

“ Would he write it for naething?

“ Na, na; he maun gang to his publisher wi’ *his* goods, just as I gang to Indy wi’ *mine*.

“ Oh! but ye’ll may be say there’s a class aboon them.

“ There’s your landed gentry, and your aristocracy.

“ Weel; will *they* let a farm to a puir man for naething?

“ If they will, ye shall hae for naething my hale stock in tred.”

Mr. Macmunny’s arguments had so much of *rationale* and conclusiveness in them, that the old gentleman scarcely knew how to answer. Much less did he feel himself able to combat them. The merchant gained the day; and no doubt conscious of this—

“ Come,” said he to his friend, changing the subject, and pulling at the same time his coat-sleeve; “do you see that fine mansion awa’ on

the left, wi' hundreds o' acres o' young shrubbery, an' hundreds o' yards o' weel-built wa's about it, an' a goodly show an' protection o' auld trees round the house?

"There's a slopin' lawn in front o't; some deer in a park by the side o't; an' some o' your finest South-downs croppin' the grass down to the very banks o' the river."

"I do see it," said the old gentleman; "and a noble and beautiful place it is."

"Weel," said Mr. Macmunny, "that's the sate o' Mr. Cotton. He's a shrewd, witty, and canny chiel, an' he started into life without a bawbee.

"But he has a lang head an' a smooth tongue; an' though he can speak a great deal mair glibly than me, an' show, may be, that siller's no worth thinkin' about, he's amaist as fond o't as mysel'. He begoon business, as I say, without a sixpence; but he gaed on and gaed on till he made his fortun' in the Indy tred, an' at last got into parliment.

“ He’s noo chiefly occupied in improvin’ his estate,—a reg’lar country gentleman.”

Mr. Macmunny pointed out to his friend, as they sailed along, a dozen mansions of inferior note; but all wearing, if not an air of sumptuousness, yet one of substantial solidity, comfort, and elbow-room. He had the history of each inmate of each villa from his intelligent and sagacious friend, and Solomon stood by, not only a looker on at the scenery but a listener to the discourse. He began verily to think that money was no despicable thing.

Mr. Macmunny proceeded.—

“ I shall content mysel’ wi’ ae further illustration (I mean than that afforded by the history of Mr. Cotton) o’ the manner in which Glasgow merchants and weavers rise, by their ain merit an’ industry, to the rank o’ country gentlemen.

“ Do you see,” said Mr. Macmunny, “ yon big house, with the four Doric pillars in front o’t and a gable o’erlaid wi’ stucco?”

“ I do,” said the listener.

“ Weel,” replied his communicative friend, “ that’s the house o’ Mr. Twist. He’s made his fortun’ by spinnin’. He began wi’ the spinnin’ jenny, an’ he’s ended by haeing the finest steam manufactory in a’ Glasgow.

“ Modern improvement has diminished his number o’ workmen by a’e fourth ; but he still keeps in his employ eight hundred han’s ; he pays them their wages every Saturday night ; he maks, they say, twa hundred pounds a-week ; he sees his party in Glasgow on Friday ; an’ comes down wi’ a select few to his country-house on Saturday, and stays till Tuesday. There they drink port an’ madeira, an’ finish wi’ punch, till they’re, maybe, nae better than they should be.

“ They gang out in the mornin’ ane wi’ his gun in his hand, anither wi’ his fishing-rod ; they tak’ a glass o’ whiskey afore they start ; an’ they carry plenty o’ the barley bree in your modern jem-crack bottles, wi’ sandwiches



o' ham, an' anchovies, an' venison, before they gang to the moors, or tak' to rowin' in the boat. They crack their jokes, an' shoot their grouse, an' catch their trouts, an' spear their salmon, till the hale party, fu' o' glee, an' every ane thinking himsel' a cleeverer sportsman than his neebor, comes back to Mr. Twist's to dinner, and to pass the night in gude fellowship an' glee.

“On Tuesday mornin', as I say, they a' gang back to Glasgow in the steam-boat; Mr. Twist gets up on his high stool, at the countin'-house; his frien's are seen busy on the exchyng; and, till next Friday, they're a' as muckle ta'en up about pullicats, rum, tobacco, and muscavadoes, as if they had naething else in their life to think about, or do.”

As the party swept over the waters of the Clyde, with both wind and current in their favour, the old gentleman and Solomon learnt that, with few exceptions, every mansion on either bank belonged to the wealthy mer-

chant, the substantial ship-builder, the overgrown spinner, or to the owner of some iron foundry, where, amid a thousand flying sparks, and in a blazing atmosphere, heated to suffocation, the welkin rings with the huge hammers of the cyclops, as they elaborate the component parts of the complicated steam engine.

“Noo, ye see,” said Mr. Macmunny, with his usual sagacity, “industry’s only the handmaid to comfort. First, industry gars the pat boil; next, it gies ye a weel-furnished house an’ a weel-stockit cellar. Ye get frae punch to port, frae port to burgundy an’ champagne. Then comes the carriage, then the country-house, wi’ a sleek butler an’ three or four valets under him: ye have twa’-three hunters in the stable; some gude roadsters for yoursel’ an’ the ladies; an’ a couple o’ Highlan’ pownies for your twa auldest sons. Then for your name, its respeckit, baith at hame an’ abroad. Your credit’s as good at Kingston

an' Calcutta as it is on the Glasgow exchange.

“ Your agents can draw thirty or forty thousan' by a packet; every win' that blaws brings ye in a ship, if you're a merchant, or the raw material, if you're a manufacturer. Off goes the twist made out o' this to Germany; an' awa' across the wide ocean, to Senegambia, Calcutta, an' Peru, gang the platillas, prints, pullicats, Paisley muslins, shirtin's gingham, calicoes, cotton cambrics, to say naething o' the bulky articles o' every description, that not only supply our very antipodees wi' our ain luxuries, as ale, porter, wine, furniture, glass, crockery, an' cutlery; but encourage shippin', train sailors, an' uphold the very British navy.

“ It's a' very weel for your gentry to think unca' sma' beer o' your Glasgow merchant, an' o' your manufacturin' body: but I opine that it's a good deal better to get an honest, abundant, an' often affluent livin' by trade an' ma-

nufactures, beginnin' wi' naething and endin' wi' a plum, than to daidle awa' life, as mony o' your gentry do, livin' on what they never earned, cuttin' down the forests planted by their ancestors, an' in continual bargains (for they're naething better) wi' Jew brokers, an' Edinburgh lawyers, to see how muckle mair, in the way o' mortgage, they can get on their estates, an' in how muckle mair embarrassment they can leave their posterity.

“Hech how! it's an awfu' thing to think what mony folk say is true, that seven-eights o' the unentailed property in this country is in the hands o' mortgagees.”

At the end of their steam voyage, they sailed into the Broomielaw; and whoever has landed there, can never forget the scene.

Noddies\* are crowding the pier, and porters with ropes, each looking like a hangman, are crowding, jostling, fighting, to secure, each for

\* The noddy is a fly.

his own broad shoulders, or respective barrow, the luggage of the last arrived passengers.

Steam is whizzing out of fifty funnels ; departures and arrivals of steam boats take place in as rapid succession as, in London, coaches and omnibuses arrive at the White Horse Cellar, and depart from it.

The air is rent with shouts ; you hear indescribable hubbub and wrangling in Gaelic and broad Scotch ; ladies scream, husbands bustle, lovers are alarmed ; and if they make too great haste to land, they are pretty sure to lose sight either of their luggage or their love.

Mr. Macmunny and his two companions were driven, they knew not how, first over a plank, and next over a steam-boat, and then over a plank again, till they were at length stranded on the pier of the Bromielaw.

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## CHAPTER XVI.

The old Gentleman and Solomon being invited to a Glasgow assembly, are introduced to Mrs. Leader, the Lady Patroness, to her daughter, Miss Leader, and to other fashionables—A Glasgow Ball.

AFTER our travellers had cleared the crowd, Mr. Macmunny, giving the old gentleman his arm, said,

“ We’re gawin, to hae a sma’ early party the day, so as to gi’e the leddies time, when we’re takin’ our punch an’ our wine, to dress after dinner for the assembly.

“ I hope ye’ll join us ; an’ I shall hae the pleeshur o’ introducin’ ye to Mrs. Leader, the lady patroness, wha, though a little turned o’ five-an-thirty, is ane o’ the maist gay, cheerfu’, witty, an’ accomplished o’ a’ our Glasgow belles.

“ I’m only sorry we canna’ claim her as a native o’ the town, nor yet o’ the country : for she was born o’ English parents, at Naples ; made a love marriage ; an’ wi’ her only daughter,—a fine young leddy o’ eighteen,—is quite the leader o’ the Glasgow beau monde.

“ But mind,” said Mr. Macmunny, pawkily, “ ye’re no’ to fa’ in love wi’ Caroline (that’s the young leddy’s name), for I hae a sly e’e to her, as just the thing for my auldest son. He’ll hae siller, an’ she has wit an’ beauty ; an’ between you an’ me, I dinna’ see how a man can better employ the interest o’ his capital than in keepin’ wi’ comfort a wife that will be a credit to him. Weel, you’ll come ? An’ be sure, by-the-by, to bring Solomon in your hand.”

“ By all means,” said the old gentleman.

He was not less pleased with Mr. Macmunny’s conversation than anxious to see the Glasgow belle, and her daughter, the destined bride of Mr. Macmunny, jun. He was especially

desirous both to see, and to show Solomon, how an assembly was conducted in the great manufacturing city of the north.

They found a select and familiar few assembled in Mr. Macmunny's drawing-room, as they entered precisely at four o'clock. The gentlemen were all "Sandies," or "Jamies," or "Johns" or "Ebenezers;" and the conversation was redolent of the transactions of the day.

Not one of the ladies was present; and Mr. Macmunny excused them on the score "o' their wantin' every minute that could be spared to mak' their preparations for the evenin'. They are a'," he continued, "in the best bed-room; but nae doubt they'll be here presently."

Presently they entered.

In swept the lady patroness, leaning on the arm of Mrs. Macmunny, and gracefully holding in her right hand a lavender bottle and a white handkerchief.

"*Mrs. Leader*," said Mrs. Macmunny; and,

disengaging her arm from that lady's, "*Miss Leader*," said Mrs. Macmunny.

It could not be denied that they were both fine women; and Mr. Macmunny seemed as proud of them as if they had been his own wife and daughter.

When Mrs. Leader "came out," in conversation, with her dark but sparkling eyes, her cheeks slightly rouged, her long black ringlets, and graceful manner, her husband was all self-complacency,—her listeners were all admiration,—and her decided admirers, at the very head of whom was Mr. Macmunny, all complacent attention. Mrs. Leader had none of the Glasgow dialect.

Both she and her daughter sang and played duets; they sang in English, French, Italian, German; their milliners lived in Regent-street; and so no wonder that the Glasgow gentlemen were a little proud, and the Glasgow ladies a little jealous, of such superior specimens of fashion and haut-ton.

After a hurried dinner (for the ladies were evidently on the fidgets to get away and prepare for the ball), they all ran up stairs; and before the dining-room door could be closed, there was heard a prodigious deal of whispering, under-laughter, and loud calls for candles.

The lady patroness had been requested to dress at Mr. Macmunny's, that she might inspect the half-dozen young ladies who were to put on their ball-room attire under her auspices.

Mr. Macmunny was a little agitated; and made his punch in such a hurry, that few could be got to pronounce it "a gude brewin'."

An hour passed away,—another,—and then, a great blaze of splendour offered itself to observation, as the ladies, now in full dress for the ball, received the gentlemen in the drawing-room.

There sat Mrs. Leader on the right hand of Mrs. Macmunny; and though of very different caste and contour, they were as nearly



assimilated on this evening as dress *could* assimilate them.

Mrs. Macmunny was stout to unwieldiness, with a face, like Norval's shield, "round as the moon," and by no means in want of rouge. Yet, because Mrs. Leader used rouge, Mrs. Macmunny rouged too.

Mrs. Leader wore a turban with an ostrich plume : so did Mrs. Macmunny.

The lady patroness had bishop's sleeves : so had Mrs. Macmunny.

Mrs. Leader had a rich band fastened by a buckle adorned with amethysts, and bracelets to correspond. To her band was appended by a golden clasp an elegant French watch ; and round her beautifully formed, but a little too much exposed, neck hung a gold chain with a richly set locket, having auburn hair on one side of it, and her husband's miniature on the other.

Ditto,—ditto,—ditto,—Mrs. Macmunny.

The lady patroness had white satin shoes on



*H. Glasgow. Drawing Room*



small feet; the merchant's lady on very large ones.

Mrs. Leader's white and taper, yet not too taper, fingers sparkled with many a gem : Mrs. Macmunny's red and puffy fingers sparkled, if not with many more, yet with many richer gems; for Mr. Macmunny's purse was a good deal longer than Mr. Leader's.

To look upon that picture, and on this, was very amusing : for while, in many respects, there was a striking similarity between this and that, there was a difference in others that inevitably provoked to merriment and contrast.

It was pretty much the same with the two young ladies. Miss Leader was the type of her mamma ; and Miss Macmunny of Miss Leader.

There was a studied, but yet amiable and always successful, effort made by Mrs. Leader to please everybody ; and her bright, though



not very steady eyes spoke things unutterable when she played the agreeable, to those by whose admiration she was flattered, and of whose arm she was proud. A handsome officer, especially if an honourable, or a young member for a county, elicited all that was enchanting from her. Their attentions enabled her with more winning smiles, more marked condescension, and more towering inward satisfaction, to patronise the Glasgow beaux and belles, who looked up to her with that decided and respectful admiration which no person in the world, perhaps, covets more, or better understands, than your lady patroness of a ball.

The mother was followed by the daughter, —a pretty pocket edition of her mamma, and with every indication of being as much *en bon point*, and as capable of managing a gay assembly as her parent, when she should attain to her years.

Then followed five or six Glasgow ladies,



having endeavoured to imitate,—but at a terrible distance,—“their glass of fashion and their mould of form,” Mrs. Leader. The third trip of Mr. Macmunny’s carriage placed the last of the party in the ball-room; in which the display of ribbons and silk, turbans and tiaras, was much more conspicuous than that of elegance or fashion.

Ball-room scenes are pretty much the same all over the world.

Mr. Macmunny, jun., was awkwardly and overwhelmingly attentive to the gay Miss Leader; and it was very evident that the old gentleman, and the *not* old lady, Miss Leader’s mother, were complacent spectators of the marked progress made by the young beau in the affections of the young lady. He was no doubt a good deal aided in this by the exhilarating influence of champagne and madeira, rum-punch, port, and no claret. Indeed, a good many of the gentlemen in the room were more or less inspired by the gaiety consequent upon

large potations of those cordials. On such occasions, the landlord remarks, "That, as it is a ball-room night, there's nae time to lose : so send in your glasses, you that's takin' punch, and push roun' the bottle the twa or three o' ye that's takin' wine."

With such hospitable copiousness and rapidity does the worthy host thus charge and re-charge the glasses of his friends, that it often happens that more is drunk at those hurried parties, than during the ordinary and comparatively sober sederunts of five or six hours.

Many of the gentlemen walk in rather equivocal sort to the ball-room ; and when there, some of them are a good deal puzzled by the glare of light, and by the manifold figures, in many-coloured dresses, whirling round, or skipping about, or hopping "down the back an' up the middle" of the country-dance.

In the intervals between the dance, many

are the visits paid by the Glasgow gentlemen to the refreshment-room; and when the ponderous supper is served in the banqueting-chamber, no wonder that hilarity, laughter, broad wit, broad caricature, some slight excess of ball-room licence,—with, however, great good nature and unbounded gallantry,—are exhibited.

END OF VOL. I.



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